America Fights for the WPA—An Editorial

New Masses

JULY 18, 1939 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

How to Own the Railroads

ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST CHALLENGING QUESTIONS. A PLAN AND TECHNIQUE OF OWNERSHIP BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

In the Line of Fire

ALVAH C. BESSIE'S STORY OF THE AMERICANS IN SPAIN

George Sokolsky's Brass Check Is Gold

BY DALE KRAMER

The Democratic Idea

BY JOSEPH FREEMAN

Cartoons by William Gropper, Mischa Richter, Gardner Rea, Others

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

ONE year ago next week—the 26th of July—the world press carried headlines on the loyalists crossing the Ebro River. Experts agreed it was one of the most spectacular achievements in military history. The Americans had an honorable place in the crossing. As part of the Fifteenth Brigade they forded the river at dawn, paralyzed the defense on the other side—about Asco and Flix—and smashed into enemy territory to the gates of Gandesa. The Fifteenth Brigade numbered many first-class writers in its ranks. We are happy to present in this issue Alvah C. Bessie's story on the Americans. It will run for three instalments. Later we will run Edwin Rolfe's articles on the guerrilla warriors—a phase of the war practically unknown. Both men served with the brigade for many months.

The mag has been having a fine summer vacation, thank you. That is, we mean our Speakers Bureau and our vacationing readers have been spreading the magazine all over the countryside from Ogunquit, Me., to Key West, Fla. The slogan contest is booming along in the camp circuit as the faithful make new friends for NM. But, my, we're greedy. We want thousands more. We'll be glad to send you some subscription blanks if that'll help your work for the magazine.

Arthur Kober, author of *Having Wonderful Time,* took a busman's holiday under our auspices recently at Camp Unity. He spoke for our summer forum before a vast throng on the subject of Hollywood. Hundreds of small girls immediately hopped freight trains for the West Coast, many of them not forgetting to subscribe before they left. The NM Forums are being held weekly at Green Mansions, Hilltop Lodge, Camp Beacon, Camp Lakeland, Copake, Chester's Zunbarg, Southwind, Camp Unity, and several other aestivatory capitals. Volunteer speakers from the staff, contributors, and friends of NM have been doing nobly fighting the summer slump. Maybe you will hint to the manager of your vacation lodge that a bundle order of NM's would take some headaches away from his social director.

We have been engulfed with requests from subscribers to change their addresses for the summer. We're shorthanded and can't make these changes as quickly as we'd like, but will try to keep the period of adjustment down to two weeks, with your patience. We could get the files switched sooner than that if some of our readers with time on their hands will volunteer us a little help.

James Dugan, NM movie critic and hot jazz enthusiast, is delivering lectures with recordings on the subject of hot music, at two camps this week. He'll be at Unity Thursday night and Lakeland Saturday morning.

Bureau drawers are hard to open in humid weather, we know that, but won't you dig up that coin card you've stuck away. This is the tail end of the fund drive and we'd like to clear every possible contribution before we make our official accounting.

A line of type slipped out of Richard Goodman's article on the Nantes Congress of the French Socialist Party, in the July 4 issue of NM, obscuring the meaning of one paragraph; this paragraph should have read: "As it is, there can be no doubt that the six months' 'truce' will see a rapid disintegration of the party—providing reaction with another opportunity to intensify its campaign on 'the failure of Marxism.' Delegate after delegate told the congress of 'the unrest which exists in the branches and the demoralization among the militants.' But Nantes has done nothing to stop this rot and nothing to end the appalling paralysis of the Socialist parliamentary group."

Alvah C. Bessie

The well known novelist and short story writer served in Spain with the Lincoln Battalion from early in February 1938, to the end of the war, holding the rank of sergeant for the last five months of the conflict. He was also Brigade correspondent for the "Volunteer for Liberty." Mr. Bessie saw his first fighting in the Aragon retreat and was in the Ebro offensive from July until September, when the International Brigades were withdrawn from Spain. The above photograph, showing him in his Battalion uniform, was taken by Harry Randall, staff photographer of the Fifteenth International Brigade. Mr. Bessie's forthcoming book on Americans in Spain, from which his story in this issue is taken, will be introduced by statements from Ernest Hemingway and Vincent Sheean; Scribner's has scheduled it for early fall publication. Bessie is the author of "Dwell in the Wilderness" and has translated several French classics.

Who's Who

DALE KRAMER, a Minnesota writer, is a former secretary of the National Farm Holiday Association and former editor of the *Farm Holiday News.* . . . The article "How the People Can Own the Railroads" is one section of a new forty-eight-page pamphlet, *Railroads in Crisis,* issued by the Labor Research Association. The pamphlet, which is published by International Publishers, will be off the press shortly. . . . Milton Meltzer, who contributes frequently to NM, is an editorial associate of the *Young Communist Review.* . . . Joseph Schrank, a Hollywood scriptwriter, worked on the funniest movie of last year, *A Slight Case of Murder,* and is now wowing the Main Stem with the funniest revue sketch of the year, "The Red Mikado" in *Pins and Needles,* confected with Harold Rome. . . . Lou Seligson is a writer for the *People's World.* . . . Joseph Freeman's article in this issue is part of his address delivered to the Third American Writers Congress. . . . Howard Selsam is an assistant professor of philosophy at Brooklyn College and the author of *What Is Philosophy?*

Flashbacks

MEMO to Carol King, attorney for Harry Bridges in the current hearings in San Francisco: Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, in whose appeals you played a part, were convicted on July 14, 1921, of killing a factory paymaster. . . . Clarence Norris, one of the Scottsboro boys for whom you have rendered invaluable legal service (and who is still alive) was sentenced to death for the third time on July 15, 1937. . . . Your client Harry Bridges assured himself of the enmity of West Coast employers by his part in the longshoremen's strike which began July 16, 1934. . . . Bridges' leadership became official as well as actual on July 13, 1936, when he was elected president of the Pacific Coast District of the International Longshoremen's Association. . . . Incidentally, Carol King, as a woman and a leader in the legal profession, you will be interested to know that the first organized feminist movement in this country was an outgrowth of the Women's Rights Convention held at Seneca Falls, N. Y. July 19, 1848.

This Week

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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New Masses

VOLUME XXXII JULY 18, 1939 NUMBER 4

How the People Can Own the Railroads

Morgan, and Kuhn, Loeb own 80 percent of tracks and trains, run them ruinously. How the people could do it with great saving and efficiency. One of America's biggest issues.

THE railway problem is the people's problem. Rail transportation continues to be basic in our economic activities. More than two-thirds of the foodstuffs, materials, and supplies the nation requires move on the rails. Thus the public at large has a most immediate interest in demanding that rail service be adequate, efficient, and on a sound economic basis, and that railroad rates be at the lowest possible level in order to protect the consumer's pocketbook and stimulate business activity.

The railroads, as one of the largest single fields of employment, make a full contribution to national purchasing power by maintaining maximum employment and maximum wages. It is important, too, that they fulfill their contributory role as a large consumer of industrial materials, equipment, and services, thus indirectly creating employment and purchasing power in many other industries. Under private operation and Wall Street control, the roads have let the people down on each of these basic requirements.

BEHIND THE TIMES

In their basic role as the means of transportation for passenger and freight traffic, the railroads have failed to keep up with the times. Private automobile traffic surpassed railway passenger traffic in volume in the early 1920's. But instead of preserving as much as possible of their passenger business by capitalizing upon the potential speed and comfort of railroad travel, the railroads in effect encouraged the shift to motor travel by charging exorbitant rates and operating obsolete, uncomfortable passenger equipment.

It was not until 1933, when railway passenger travel had declined 64 percent from its 1920 level, that the Western and Southern roads made an effort to regain some of their lost passenger business by sharp fare reductions and improvements in service and equipment. In the East, where potential passenger traffic is heaviest, the ICC had to compel the roads to reduce their fares in June 1936. As a result, both their traffic and revenues from passenger service increased rapidly. New equipment and faster schedules had also begun to show their effect.

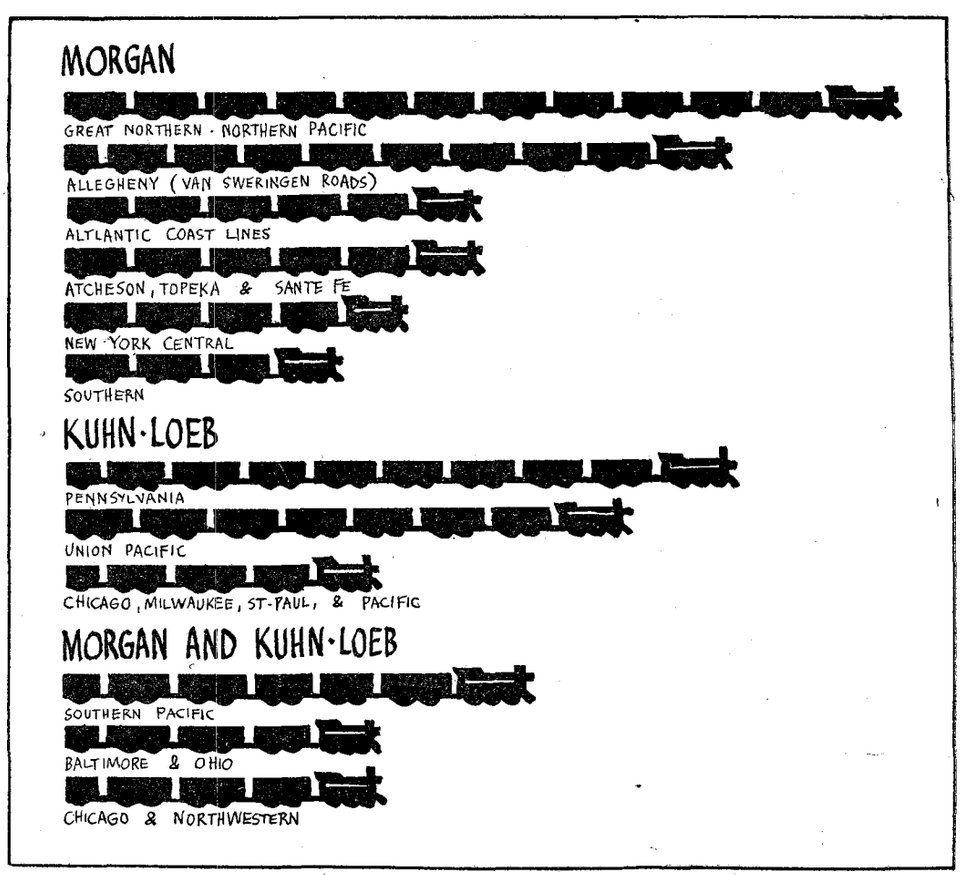
In the more important field of freight traffic the experience has been very similar. During the pre-war decade, 1907-16, the average annual increase in freight traffic measured in ton-miles was a little over 4 percent. This compares favorably with the percentage rise in total national production during the same period. But in the decade 1920-29, the average annual increase in railroad freight transportation was only 1 percent, an increase considerably less than the average rise in total national production during the same years.

Some part of the decline in the volume of railroad traffic has of course been the result of circumstances beyond their control. However, the railroads themselves have aided their competitors through inflexibility, refusal to depart from monopolistic rate practices, and reluctance to improve service to match the new appeal of other forms of transportation.

MONOPOLY RATES

Historically the railroads have always sought to fix their rates on the principle of "what the traffic will bear." In other words, some shippers, controlling large amounts of traffic or having access to alternate routes, have been able to buy transportation at relatively low rates. These the railroads have offset by high charges to shippers in small lots and those having no choice of routes. Years of regulation by the ICC, and even the entrance of new competition for the railroads, have not succeeded in eliminating this basic principle of rate-making.

The burden of high railroad rates falls upon the small business men, farmers, and consumers. Railroad freight charges are an important element in the cost of living. Rail transportation of farm products and livestock alone cost $638,000,000 in 1937. This amounts to an average of about $21 for each family in the United States. Directly and indirectly the total annual freight bill of about $3,500,000,000 is borne by the people.



Ad Reinhardt

EIGHTY PERCENT *of America's Class 1 railroad mileage is controlled by two banking houses: Morgan, and Kuhn, Loeb. Each symbol represents 1 percent of the country's total mileage.*

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For the American nation as a whole, public ownership of the railroads will bring better service at lower rates. For many years, owing to their monopoly position, the railroads made little or no attempt to provide up-to-date service, until traffic lost to competitors began to reach alarming proportions. Under public ownership, however, management will have no other interest than to concentrate all its attention on giving the people the best service possible.

The method of bringing about public ownership and control of the railway system is relatively simple, although opponents of the idea have hedged it about with all kinds of hocus-pocus. A first step is to set up a corporation, which might be called the National Railway Corp. It would be granted power to acquire, own, and operate all railroads. All the stock of this corporation, which should be nominal in amount, would be permanently held by the United States Treasury. The direction and control of the corporation would be placed in the hands of a governing body (board of directors) composed of, say, thirty citizens of the United States appointed by the President in the following manner: five appointed with the consent of the Senate to represent consumers or the general public, five representatives of the farmers, five appointed at the recommendation of the other shippers of the country, five appointed from among the operating executives of the corporation, and ten appointed to represent labor

Debt Reduction

BANKERS oppose any reduction in railroad debt for a very definite reason. A large part of the profits from their control of the railroads comes from fat underwriting fees, commissions, and other fees connected with selling railroad securities to the public. If the total amount of railroad bonds were reduced, the bankers would have correspondingly fewer chances to make such profits. The ideal situation for them is a perpetually large railroad debt, consisting of individual bond issues, replaced, as they mature, by new issues of equal or larger amounts and sold to the public.

The extent of such profits can be illustrated by the financing of the Van Sweringen railroads during the 1920's. J. P. Morgan & Co. and its close associate, the Guaranty Co., derived the following profits, established by the Wheeler committee:

Profits to J. P. Morgan & Co.	$6,957,933
Profits to Morgan partners	1,368,973
Profits to Guaranty Co.	5,082,800
Fees to Guaranty Co. Trust Department	437,400
	$13,847,106

Purchasing Power

IN years past the railroads have played an important part in providing demand for the products of other industries. The figures below show the percentage of total output of some of our most important industries that the railroads have taken in recent years. National ownership of the railroads would increase and stabilize these purchases.

Bituminous coal	23
Fuel oil	19
Iron and steel	17
Timber	16

—two representing the employees engaged in conducting transportation, two representing those doing maintenance of equipment and stores work, two engaged in the maintenance of ways and structure department and in related construction work, two representing those engaged in service and clerical capacities, and two to represent the non-transportation workers of the country at large.

BY DECREE

The actual taking over of the facilities and rolling stock of the present railway system could be done by governmental decree similar to that by which government control was established in wartime. Low interest general government bonds (not special railroad bonds) would be given to the various companies in accord with the value placed on their railroad property. These government bonds would constitute payment in full for the property taken over. It would then be up to the officers of the individual companies to make the distribution of these bonds (or to retain them and distribute the interest received on them) in accord with the equitable claims of the various grades of bond and stock holders of the companies.

The government would purchase only the actual railroad property, and not all the other assets of the railroads, such as lands not used in transportation, oil wells, securities, and so forth. If the owners of the companies wish to retain their corporate identities in order to manage these non-railroad properties or to distribute the interest on the government bonds received by the company in return for its railroad properties, that is their own affair. The point is that ownership and control of the actual rail properties would pass to the government corporation, and the railway system of the country would be asked to pay only the low interest on the limited amount of government bonds issued in conformity with the present value of the properties.

The price the government pays for the roads should conform to their present value as determined by their earning power. It should not be based on an inflated value that covers graft, water, and a large amount of facilities that are no longer able to "earn their keep" as railway properties. Their value could be determined simply in the following manner.

The average income from strictly railway operations (designated "net railway operating income" in railway statements) should be averaged over a period long enough to cover both good and bad years, possibly a ten-year period. This will show established earning power of the various roads. To get the total capital rightfully represented by these earnings this ten-year average earnings figure should be capitalized at the going rate. The going rate can be determined easily by finding the relationship of the total market value of all the bonds and stocks of each railroad to its net railway operating income for some recent period.

LOWER RATES

The government, in effect, would be giving the present owners the benefit of any doubt, because the prices at which these owners buy and sell railroad securities in the stock and bond markets represents their own appraisal of the value of the properties behind the securities. Even so, based on mid-1938 market prices, it is estimated that such a method would give a total value for all the railroads of the country of about $10,000,000,000. If the government bonds to the amount of $10,000,000,000 bore an interest rate of 3 percent (which is high under present conditions in the money market), the total fixed charges of the railway system would be $300,000,000 a year instead of the present figure for interest and dividends of about $800,000,000 a year in both 1936 and 1937 (it was much higher prior to 1932). With such a saving of $500,000,000 a year, rates could be lowered, many more workers employed, and additional expenditures made for equipment and maintenance materials. In other words, a big step toward alleviating the present crisis would be possible.

Initially the government corporation would take over the employees and most of the officers of the various railroad companies. The minimum number of employees should be 1,500,000 and if necessary the number taken over would be gradually increased to this level. Continued employment of the officer staff taken over would depend upon the efficiency they showed in conducting operations and managing the properties in the public interest.

While the board of directors as outlined above would lay down the general policies for the government roads to follow, the actual operation of the roads would be placed in the hands of a staff of officers. For the purposes of managerial control, the railway system would be divided into a number of regions, each under a separate manager. Perhaps the eight regions now recognized by the ICC would provide operating units of the proper size to manage, but only experience will de-

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termine the limits beyond which the systems are too big for managerial efficiency.

WHO GETS THE PROFITS

Since the federal government is to be the sole stockholder of the National Railway Corp., the profits of the enterprise, after payment of all expenses and charges, would normally fall to it. But in order to provide an incentive to both the management and workers, and to compensate them for efficient work, the proposals on this point of the Plumb Plan for government ownership advanced by railway labor in 1919 should be followed. These were that in any year half of the profits were to go into the government treasury, the other half divided between the management and the workers. The latter half was to be distributed in the ratio of their annual earnings except that the managerial officers were to get double the rate of the wage earners. As for the government's half of the profits, it would be wise to set aside a part of these (say one-half) as a reserve fund with which to retire the railway debt.

One of the first steps to be taken after government control is effected will be to institute a thorough investigation of the whole railway system with a view to lowering costs, decreasing rates, and providing improved service and better conditions for the workers.

The present railway owners and their spokesmen of course make many predictions as to the dire effects of public ownership. Most of this is propaganda prepared by the "public relations" counsels of the financiers who cannot face the possibility of losing their long control over the country's railway system. Here are three of the most widespread misconceptions:

First, there is the bogy that public ownership of the railroads is going to usher in "socialism." But, actually, over 380,000 miles (or 48 percent) of the total world railway mileage of 790,000 is now government-owned and most of this is in countries with capitalist economies and capitalist governments.

"WIDOWS AND ORPHANS"

The second popular bogy is that public ownership of the railroads will wipe out the investments of countless "widows and orphans." In the first place, the government will be giving its own bonds in exchange for the railroad properties to the full-going value of these properties. The total amount calculated under the suggested plan would no doubt be little different from the total present market value of all the outstanding railroad securities excluding those held by various railroads themselves.

Railroad securities are now valued on the market at about 50 cents to the dollar (par value) on the average. Consequently it is clear that drastic depreciation of railroad securities has already taken place, and this has been the result of private ownership and operation, not government ownership.

A second aspect of the answer to this bogy is that widows and orphans, even the small investors, do not own most of the railroad securities. Big financiers and their financial institutions are the owners. More than half of the total railroad bonds outstanding are owned by insurance companies, banks, endowed educational institutions, and foundations taken together. At par, the total holdings of these institutions amount to some $6,600,000,000. Now, it is frequently pointed out by opponents of government ownership that anything which tends to lower the price of these holdings would cause great loss to all the people with insurance policies or savings bank accounts.

The proportion of railroad securities to the total assets of these institutions is not large. Insurance companies on the average have about 10 percent or 12 percent of their total assets invested in railroad bonds and stock. For savings banks the proportion is much smaller. These institutions will be far better off with the smaller amount of sound government bonds which the plan suggests be given for the railway properties, than they are at present with $6,600,000,000 of railroad bonds of doubtful worth.

CANADA'S EXAMPLE

The last bogy, that government control will mean inefficient and extravagant operation of the railway system, is disposed of easily. Other countries have been able to do a good job of railroad operation under government control. Despite adverse capitalistic influences, the Canadian National Railways in Canada, for example, are as well run as their private competitor, the Canadian Pacific Railway. The reason the former system does not make a good *financial* showing is that the Canadian government grossly overpaid the owners of the old railroad securities which were taken into the Canadian National. The road was loaded with an intolerable burden of bonded debt which no one could expect it to carry. This should be a lesson to us not to pay too high a price for the roads taken over. Actually the government railroad corporation can do a far better job of operating the country's railway system than the private managements, for elimination of Wall Street control will remove the pressure to operate only in the interests of the financiers. We have seen that this type of operation has been very wasteful and frequently directly opposite to the best interests of the shipping and traveling public.

Under government control, the railway management and workers will be judged on the basis of the amount and quality of transportation service they produce and given bonuses on the basis of profits earned. They will no longer be judged on the basis of the number of dollars they divert into the pockets of the security holders and financial manipulators. In other words, the incentive under government control will be to render the best service possible. This should be the best guarantee that the roads will be operated strictly in the public interest, with employment stabilized at a level consistent with the need to provide adequate and efficient transportation.

LABOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATION.

The Railroad Workers

THE railroad workers themselves stand to gain enormously from nationalization. The plan of public ownership should contain the following provisos for the workers, all of which can be had with no rise in costs and with a saving for the consumer.

1. A guaranteed minimum working force of 1,500,000.
2. A six-hour day, thirty-hour week, with no reduction in the prevailing day wages.
3. Hourly wage rates should be set substantially higher than those at present in effect under the terms of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
4. Two weeks' annual vacation, with pay; ten days' sick leave.
5. The right of collective bargaining and the right to strike must be maintained. Discrimination in employment or union membership because of race, creed, or politics must be barred. The present handling of grievances by the National Railroads Adjustment Board should be greatly improved.
6. An integrated system of economic security, federally administered, and all regular compensation should be ensured.

The Farmer

RECENT depression years have disclosed the farmer's reasons for concern over freight rates. While the prices he received for his produce dropped drastically, freight rates remained at high levels. For 1937, for example, the Department of Agriculture reports the following relationship between farm prices and freight rates on particular commodities:

	Farm Prices (1913=100)	Freight Rates (1913=100)
Beef cattle	118	156
Sheep	98	141
Hogs	127	145
Wheat	121	138
Cotton	67	101

A downward revision of freight rates under national ownership would greatly benefit the farmer. He would either receive a larger share of the retail food dollar, or lower prices would stimulate an increase in consumption of farm products, thereby increasing his income. Lower rates would also cut the cost of things he buys, making his income go further.

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Sokolsky: His Brass Check Is Gold

Dale Kramer chronicles the progress of a newspaperman from Emma Goldman's lap to Girdler's bosom. The philosophy and friends of a New York "Herald Tribune" columnist.

Mischa Richter

IN 1916 George Sokolsky was an obscure and voluble anarchist. The process by which he acquired his gold-plating, his $35,000-a-year income, is probably of little value except as an admonition to those who withhold faith in the wonders of alchemy. It provides conclusive evidence that assiduous rubbing of a brass check will eventually turn it to gold.

Mr. Sokolsky has, he informs us, "lived under Communism, feudalism, democracy, anarchy, and near-fascism." The chronology has not been given, but it may safely be assumed that his anarchy period refers to the days when his tent was pitched in Emma Goldman's parlor and his stomach was filled, if at all, by such items as could be readily commandeered. In the meantime, between classes at the Columbia University School of Journalism, he orated from soap boxes in Union Square, managing at the same time to satisfy a need for self-expression and to master a style which has successfully played upon the yearnings of half a million Rotarians.

Of late, memories of those old days have returned and Sok (the diminutive is his own idea) has sneered at the old comrades who softened their beliefs to the extent of going into the war, but in a capacity less dangerous than that of carrying a gun. At the same time he looks down from the haughty heights occupied by an old anarchist at the radicals and liberals of today, whom he compares unfavorably with the conscientious objectors of 1917. He would have been the firiest objector of them all, except that he was converted to the war. Even then he would have been a hero in the trenches, had it not happened that he left the country.

His departure, however, was for the noble purpose of aiding in the Russian Revolution, or at least that was part of his idea when a job on an English newspaper in Petrograd was accepted. It was merely unfortunate that he did not like the revolution. In the first place, the peasants and the soldiers and the workers around Smolny Institute ate their soup noisily, and he felt that the intriguing about him was not for the best of purposes. Besides, his newspaper was owned by the Allies, who wished the Russians to remain in the war.

The upshot was that, like most other hostile foreigners, he was evicted from the country following the Bolshevik assumption of power. He wanted to come home, but that was difficult. By chance, in the hurry of events, or because of the difficulties in negotiating war-torn Europe, the dejected young journalist found himself aboard a refugee-packed train rolling slowly across Siberia. New York was a long way off; he finally was set down in China with $11 in his pocket and a burning hatred of Communists in his heart. After a little he managed to secure a position as servant to a young Chinese boy.

SUCCESS IN THE ORIENT

Not until a dozen years later did he escape the Orient. Sometimes he did not wish to; then again, the desire to return to New York was all-powerful. The role of servant to the Chinese boy naturally was temporary and after a while he secured a job as adviser to a Chinese youth movement. Then came work for a newspaper in Tientsin and later the editorship of the Japanese-controlled *Far Eastern Review*. In the meantime he fell in love with and married a beautiful English-schooled Chinese girl. A son was born to them. Though he married a Chinese, politically Sokolsky has remained faithful to his first love: a recent issue of the *China Weekly Review* lists him as a Japanese propagandist.

When the leaders of the Kuomintang broke the back of the Chinese Revolution by turning against the Communists and all other militants, Sokolsky offered his services and became an adviser of some of the Chinese officials. This stage of his career has led to charges that he trafficked in arms for his own profit; some letters discovered by the Nye munitions-investigating committee spurred the accusations. Sokolsky declares that the affair consisted solely of his willingness to put a man who claimed to have arms for sale in touch with the proper Chinese officials —a purely routine matter, since the government was in the market for materials of war. At any rate the present invincible critic of American affairs did not become wealthy in China, for he was finally dependent upon Ellery Sedgwick, then editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* and later an apologist for General

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Franco, for an opportunity to return here.

Following the long and none too happy exile, Sokolsky settled down in Greenwich Village, a land he knew, and looked about him. His availability as a lecturer to the Ladies Aid Society, the "civic group," and the Lion's Club can readily be seen. He had been a great many places. That was the travel angle. As a converted radical, he could give the Reds plenty. As a Jew, he could tell what was wrong with the Jew. But the job of establishing himself in the capacity was not easy, and at first only a few dollars dribbled in from that source, so that fees from the *Atlantic Monthly* had to provide most of his sustenance. Then came the Japanese invasion of Manchuria with resultant interest in affairs of the Orient. Here was an opportunity. He wrote an extended series of pieces for the New York *Times* magazine section and commenced composition of his book *The Tinder Box of Asia.* At the same time there was an increase in demand for his lectures.

FRIEND OF THE COMPANY UNION

But interest in the Orient would not last forever; the search for material continued. Soon he noticed that Ellery Sedgwick's friends liked to sit around and discuss the horrors of labor unions and radicalism. Sokolsky was a good talker himself, and, moreover, he could speak as a man who had returned from hell. Articles on the subject were written and carried to the editor of the *Times* magazine, but he was told to stick to foreign subjects. Sedgwick, however, furnished a forum and even, as Sokolsky later said in the dedication of a book to him, provided "inspiration and direction."

That, of course, was before the days of the CIO and it was old Bill Green who, bomb in hand, frightened the kindly, defenseless industrialist. Reading the articles, later gathered into a book called *Labor's Fight for Power,* one gets a picture of labor leaders dividing their days and nights between riotous living and banging rank-and-filers with a gavel.

Sok's philosophy was pretty comforting. The company union, he explained, persists "because it is sound . . . and because of the social relationship of capital and labor in American life." He found every worker expecting to be a Henry Ford. All the efforts of the AFL, backed by the President, would be unable to break down resistance of workers to unionization, he assured the employers, and cited the automobile and steel industries as proof that workers did not want to and never would organize.

On the other hand, he felt that prevention of coercion into company unions was an attempt to force employees into the AFL. Anyhow, he wanted to know, how can it be determined whether the boss gives money to the company union out of friendliness or to influence it? Moreover, he felt the company unions to be "an experiment in labor democracy," and severely chastised employers who cut profits to pay higher wages on the ground that such a policy merely bred Communism.

That Sokolsky had discovered the raw meat on which neanderthal financiers and industrialists feed was undeniable. The New York *Herald Tribune* printed a piece or two and decided to continue it as a regular weekly feature, although a contract was not signed, and none is to this day in force.

CRASS STUPIDITIES

It would be pointless to list the hundreds of crass stupidities which have appeared during the last three years in his Monday stint. The sociological interest lies in the fact that they were committed at all, for Sokolsky is not stupid, and when he is crass it is because he is aware that crassness is wanted of him. Thus we may gather from his works that the Girdlers and Morgans are not long on subtlety and that a little blood in their whimsy is desired.

Suffice it to mention that, with the advent of the CIO, the commentator forgot his old war on the AFL, finding that until the year 1936 the American organized labor movement was voluntary and democratic. The officials who now were declared to be collecting huge sums, probably for riotous living, were members of the CIO. The term "racket" was common in his pieces, and he felt that unions should be incorporated and other restrictions placed on their operations. On one occasion, however, he did justify a strike, or rather attempted unsuccessfully to incite it. Weirton steel workers were advised to strike if their heartless boss came to terms with the CIO. Meanwhile, one of his greatest thrills occurred when he was shown through a company store.

At the same time the New Deal came in for constant and unrestrained attack. A character called Sam was created to belabor President Roosevelt and his administration from the viewpoint of the everyday man, but despite Sokolsky's most strenuous efforts Sam never comes very close to the American lingo. The effort to imitate Peter Finley Dunne's Mr. Dooley has had a demoralizing effect on other columnists, as well.

Once Sokolsky had the following to say of Congressional investigating committees: "The greatest encroachments that are being made on our freedom today lie in [their] character and methods. . . . The investigators do not protect the investigated person according to the rules of evidence, according to the

Fulfilled Prophecy

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY'S SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM honors George Sokolsky as an illustrious alumnus. Sokolsky writes the sort of thing Nicholas Murray Butler and the trustees like to read. This past year Sokolsky was invited to address the students. He used the occasion to roast the American Newspaper Guild, "all right for bad newspapermen."

Columbia, however, forgets that Sokolsky never graduated, that he was dishonorably expelled in 1917. In 1916, before Sokolsky was bounced, he was called before the then director, Dr. Talcott Williams, and given a verbal lacing, part of which we reproduce from the stenographic report:

"In talking with your instructors in regard to your absences I find the general impression among them is that you are not honest-minded.

". . . There is a general impression that you are a grafter and a sponge. That you raise money by borrowing, that you ask for what you want, and are willing to take it wherever you can get it. . . . When I remember the change which has come in the opinion of you since you entered the School, I am appalled. . . . You have no weight in your class. You have no influence in the School and you are looked upon all around by those who come in contact with you as a man who does not have and does not understand the truthfulness that lies behind the truth. . . .

". . . If you had gone to jail and served time, you could get over that more easily than you can get over this impression which now surrounds you at all points. . . .

". . . Make good? If by making good, you mean you will always be able to pick up a living, and that on every new group of people you will make an impression with your bright eyes, your capacity for expression, your ready phrase-making, and your habit of so commenting upon what pleases you, that you leave the impression that your acts and efforts are guided by principle and a desire to serve, you will. These all will carry you for a while; you will begin with influence but you will lose it, and you will have all through life (unless you change) to be perpetually seeking new groups as you have in the three years you have been in the School.

"You are always looking for a buffer against the hard knocks of life . . . and you have made the impression that whatever else happens, you intend to have an easy exit from trouble. . . .

". . . unless you change, your end is certain."

Less than a year later, on June 7, 1917, an official Columbia University card read: "Mr. G. E. Sokolsky, Journalism, was dropped for discipline."

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privacy of documents, according to the right to be tried by jury and to be represented by counsel."

The reader may have guessed that the foregoing appeared before Mr. Martin Dies of Texas commenced his historic adventures.

But it turned out that the columnist had reason for more than a passing dislike of the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, against which the remarks were directed. In the summer of 1938 the investigators, during a probe of a Cleveland publicity firm, revealed that $40,000 had been paid to a certain George Ephraim Sokolsky, whom the newspapers described as an "author and lecturer." Services rendered, it turned out, had included preparation of pamphlets and innummerable lectures, many of them before so-called "civic progress" groups, for the American Iron and Steel Institute, which had furnished the funds. A letter was also dug up in which the president of the Steel Institute honored Sokolsky by terming him "the outstanding advocate of the open shop in America."

So what? The *Herald Tribune* columnist laughed in his most self-assured manner and trotted out an explanation planted sometime before. For a long time he had been making records for the National Association of Manufacturers, he explained, setting forth "the capitalist point of view." That fact had been printed. On another occasion he told of consultation by the NAM and the American Iron and Steel Institute. However, the reader had gathered the impression that all this advice poured from an overflowing heart, particularly as a column had once been devoted to comparing salaried CIO officials with reformers who pay their own expenses in a selfless fight.

Those who still persisted in accusations of venality he confounded with the following stern words: "If I am employed by business men or business organizations, it is not to bring me in line with their doctrine, but rather for me to bring them in line with my doctrine."

The tactic is known as boring from within. Acceptance of the filthy money is undoubtedly to throw them off the track.

HIS OPINIONS OF HIS COLLEAGUES

The writer had the opportunity of visiting the *Herald Tribune's* cave-man in the study of his properly sumptuous apartment on West End Avenue. (He also has a farm in Massachusetts.) It is a large study, the walls lined with books. Behind a great black desk, on which there is a great variety of Oriental pipes and images, sits Sokolsky, his body now enormously round and his hair cropped close. His secretary has a smaller desk and business goes on, as it should, in a businesslike fashion.

The interviewer had a number of questions prepared, but the conversation opened on an unlisted but interesting point—Mr. Sokolsky's opinion of his fellow columnists. These are worth recording.

Heywood Broun would rate higher around there if his colleague considered him a man of brain power. That may be putting it a little too bluntly, for Sokolsky credits Broun with a good enough heart—the trouble is solely in his head, or rather lack of what should be in it. Consequently the author of "It Seems to Me" becomes, in Sok's words, a mere stooge. But put ability to think straight into Broun, and take the laziness out of him, and the two columnists might be seen marching arm in arm down the road. Possibly J. B. Matthews would occupy Broun's other arm.

The chief trouble with Dorothy Thompson is that she doesn't understand the capitalist system. At this point I took pains to inquire whether the statement was off the record, for it is plain that a man who will purposely make a remark like that cares not a snap of the finger for life and limb. But Mr. Sokolsky let it stand. He believes her to be a liberal, however, and was somewhat surprised to learn that she describes herself as a liberal conservative. But it was plain that he didn't consider her much of a judge of that or anything else.

Walter Lippmann and Mark Sullivan were also put down as liberals, although Walter received by far the highest rating. In fact, Sok considers Lippmann one of the great men of the day. To be exact, the Matthew Arnold of our time. The admiration, naturally, is of the type which one general accords another, for Sokolsky considers himself an arch-conservative and therefore Lippmann's enemy. On the other hand, Gen. Hugh S. Johnson was labeled a conservative, a term which the hardy old cavalryman, who unfortunately was unhorsed just as he was about to gallop us triumphantly back to prosperity, may not appreciate.

But the real payoff was the designation given the fair-haired boy of Roy Howard's stable, the fierce Strangler Pegler. Pegler—get this—was termed "the American Tolstoy." To save Mr. Pegler the bother of research, it may be explained that Tolstoy was a Russian novelist who, in Mr. Sokolsky's opinion, correctly interpreted the mind of his nation. In other words, Pegler is a 100 percent American; the figure may run higher, but certainly no less. In a way, however, the high-flown comparison is typical of Sokolsky's professional duties. He takes an idea dear to the hearts of the strong but somewhat unlettered men of Wall Street and dresses it up. Previously Pegler's fame in that section rested largely on his ability to compose right-thinking columns in short words. Now, thanks to Sokolsky, the term "Spirit of America" is whispered by brokers into the ears of one another as Pegler is seen locked in deadly combat with the Young Communist League.

The opinions of fellow commentators completed, glasses of Coca-Cola were brought in, and the conversation proceeded to subjects of a political and economic nature. Little can be added to the outline as culled from Sokolsky's works, except that he wanted it understood that he is the most capitalistic of men, and lately has become a chauvinist. Exactly what he meant by the latter term was unclear, except that it seemed to set him apart from the garden variety of flagwavers, perhaps even a notch or two above Pegler.

Politically speaking, he would prefer to see Herbert Hoover the next President. But he doesn't really believe the Great Engineer will get the call, though it is his feeling that only a boom can prevent a Republican victory in 1940, and perhaps it is too late for that to do the Democrats any good. The coming of the boom is treated as a certainty for the reason that it is the chief article of Sokolsky's faith. He sees it soon, coming out of the chemical industry. Perhaps he has a piece of it, for in his opinion the healthiest aspect of any economic system is speculation. "People must," he stated emphatically, "be allowed to lose money."

DALE KRAMER.

Joseph Serrano

"Positively no! Can't let down the economy drive at this stage of the game."

Foxy Pass

WEBB MILLER, chief of the United Press European bureau, is trying to explain a byline story from his typewriter that never occurred. During the Canadian tour of their royal majesties, Mr. Miller sent out a deliciously detailed story of the historic meeting of their highnesses and Harold Stassen, Republican governor of Minnesota, at Winnipeg. The only hitch was that Mr. Stassen never greeted the king and queen, and Mr. Miller was caught on a limb with an unchecked pre-story. The Minneapolis *Star,* not to be outdone, printed a fake composite photo of the governor shaking hands with the king.

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In the Line of Fire

New Masses is proud to be first to present a chapter from a forthcoming novel on the Americans in Spain, by Alvah C. Bessie, who fought through most of the major actions with them.

THE American battalion went into the lines exhausted from two days of marching and counter-marching. The late March nights were cold; the days were flaming hot. Coming up from near Batea the day ground them down. The pack straps cut into their shoulders; the fascist *avion* was overhead and the dust of the roads bit into their lungs. The nights wore them down with their eternal vigilance; you could hear the night listening as you were listening, for something you had no way of knowing till you met it.

Before dawn of that first day they made camp in an olive field; the men dropped under the gnarled trees and slept heavily; some did not even wrap in their blankets; they were too tired to unroll them. They lay with their legs stretched stiffly out, snoring. There was a moon and there were heavy clouds that blacked it out from time to time; it was cold. The guards stood at some distance from the sleeping men, lonely with their rifles, wrapped in blankets like Indians.

In those long hours before dawn it was impossible to think of what was coming with the day; impossible to realize that the training period was over, and that within a few hours you would meet what you had come four thousand miles to Spain to meet. But there was no fear in Ben, standing with his blanket wrapped around him, the Russian rifle cold under the blanket, hugged to his body; you could feel no fear when all you wanted was to sleep. It made him sore; technically he was a squad leader, but his section leader had made him stand the guard. Hy, the machine-gun corporal, was dead to the world, his clown's face with the wide nose, the thick lips, staring at the moon, his mouth open. Ben yawned and, against his better judgment, sat down on a rock in the low brush and let his head droop. The nod woke him and he reached for the pack of *Gaulois,* carefully lit one under the protection of the blanket, took deep drags, and stuck his head out like a turtle, to exhale the smoke. There was no pleasure in smoking like this; he pinched the butt and put it in his pocket.

Within the hour there was a stir in the camp; he heard the commandante's American voice saying, *"Atentos; en pie!"*; heard the men, reluctant to be wakened, grumbling in half-sleep, moaning like women in childbirth. There was mist over the ground and the sagebrush was fragrant in the damp, pre-morning air. Ben wondered whether he was supposed to stand his ground until he was relieved; his loneliness was intensified by the possibility that the battalion might forget that he was there, move off without him. Then he heard Hy's voice calling his name, and he came into camp, stumbling over the low brush, catching the dangling blanket on the twigs. The battalion was forming up; the men were grunting, pushing each other, adjusting their equipment. He rounded up his squad and moved off with the rest. Where was the enemy?

They were moving in extended order up and down hill, wild, wooded country, rough to the feet, exhausting. Ben had been sent ahead as a scout, and he moved in a dream of heightened consciousness, somewhat ahead of the rest, off to the left, back to the right, making contact with outfits on the flanks. Where were the fascists? It was going to be a hot day; the artillery they had been hearing the past few days, back of the lines, was silent; the sky was clean of *avion,* silent with heavy white clouds hanging suspended, burning up now in the brightening sun. He could feel sweat trickling in his armpits, down his back. He shifted the blanket roll, the pack sack, moved the loaded rifle from one hand to the other, grumbling when the long needle bayonet caught in the branches of the fig trees. Then they approached an open piece of terrain—an olive field with a wooded hill beyond. Where was the enemy? The section leader, a printer from the Bronx, said, "I want you to go ahead, Ben, as a feeler."

He wasn't exactly sure of the meaning of the word, but as he moved off into the olive field, taking cover automatically behind each tree, feeling the weight of the heavy sweater and the leather jacket in the pack sack, it became clear to him. It was something like a combat scout; he was expected to "contact" the enemy; if the enemy was there. He was expected to draw his fire, and as he moved forward, seeing the other men taking cover at the far edge of the grove, there was a painful sensation in his chest and he automatically turned his body to present less surface to the front. It was difficult to maintain the mind at its present pitch of awareness; to take in everything, to see clearly. His eyes misted with perspiration; his throat was dry.

There was nothing on the hill and the battalion moved into position, took cover and waited. Ben and Hy were sent ahead to the next hill; there was nothing there, and they moved onto the next. "This is apple pie," the section leader said as he came up to the rock where Ben was sitting panting in the sun.

A whip cracked overhead and the two men ducked. Ben looked at the section leader and said, "What was that, Dick?" "That," said the section leader, "was a bullet. *Seccion!"* he shouted to the sweating men lying in the lee of the hill. *"En posicion! A tierra!"* Automatically the men obeyed, moving cautiously forward onto the crest of the hill, dropping their blankets and pack sacks behind them. *"Abajo!"* the section leader shouted. He didn't get down himself, Ben noticed, as he crouched idiotically behind a bush. "I can't see anything," he said. "Well, get further forward," the section leader said. "Get down, you dumb fool!"

They lay on their bellies on the crest of the hill, straining for sight of the enemy. The crackling overhead intensified; twigs and leaves floated down onto them. I can't see anything, Ben thought. *"Fuego!"* yelled the section leader.

"Where?" Ben said, feeling close to tears.

"They're on the hill opposite," said the printer. "Give 'em hell, *chicos!"* he yelled, moving up and down on the ridge, placing his corporals. "Dick!" Ben said, "you're exposing yourself!"

"There's lots of room between bullets," the section leader said.

When I get into action, Hy had thought, I'm going to take over this machine gun myself. Now he lay on the crest of the hill, in a little hollow behind a tree trunk. Sid, the gunner, had received a glancing bullet in the forehead, and lay with a handkerchief around his head, his eyes wide with fear. The loaders were slightly behind and to the left. Hy lay down to the light gun, enjoying the feel of it at his shoulder, the sense of power when it chattered and tried to creep away from him. He thought, It's a long way to Flatbush, bit his lips, and let a burst fly at the rough crest opposite. You rarely saw the enemy; they kept pretty well covered.

He saw Ben move out of the line at his left in response to a summons from Dick. He's sending him on patrol, Hy thought. That was shortly after the Spanish boy had come crawling through the underbrush toward him, his mountainous pack swaying like the howdah on an elephant's back. The damned fool! he'd thought, and shouted, *"Abajo, camarada! Cuidado!"* But the boy kept coming at him, smiling, saying, "I want to see the machine gun work."

"Get down, comrade!" Hy shouted. "You're in the line of fire," but the boy kept crawling toward him, smiling, saying, "I want to see the machine gun working," and then his face changed and he rolled onto his side, his hands seeking his groin, shouting, *"Mama mia! Ai! mama mia!"*

When Ben came back from his first patrol alone, the Spanish boy was still lying in front of their lines, groaning. Dick told him to get a stretcher bearer, and he went back down the hill, sweating and grunting to himself, but momentarily relieved by being out of the line

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of fire. Below, he found a first-aid man, but no stretcher was available and the first-aid man was reluctant to come back up the hill. "Bring him down," he told Ben. "We can't," Ben said. "You'll have to go up." All the way back up the hill the first-aid man kept saying, "Keep down; be careful; look out; it's pretty hot up there; where is he?" "I'll take you there," Ben said. And when he had shown him the place where the boy lay moaning over and over, *"Mama mia, ayudame!"* he fell back behind the hill and sat down to light a cigarette.

It was a nice feeling, hearing the bullets cracking overhead (you never hear the one that hits you), knowing they couldn't get at you. But he began to shake the way he had been shaking before when, after three hours firing from that position behind the bush, he had rolled out and come back of the hill for the first time. In the line itself you fired till the rifle got too hot to handle; then you opened the bolt and blew down the barrel and let it cool, resting your face on your extended arm, waiting. You got so you were afraid to lift your head again to fire, certain that the moment you lifted it the bullet you wouldn't hear would catch you smack in the middle of the forehead. And then you suddenly awoke to the realization that you had been asleep in the line itself, dead to the world under the drilling of the rifle and machine-gun bullets, any one of which might have. . . . You awoke with a jerk and a pounding heart, and fired conscientiously, compensating by the intensity of your fire the lapse of consciousness. The metal work blistered your hand; the sun blistered your neck; your throat was dry and working.

Then there was the sudden animal cry of the Spanish boy and the female screaming, the pleading voice over and over and over, and Dick behind, saying, "Ben, roll over and come back here." When he got back, Dick wasn't in sight, so he sat and rolled a cigarette with the little machine, but the tobacco wouldn't stay in the roller and the paper got crumpled and his hands shook. Dick said, "Look over there; there's a mountain over there. Well, there are a lot of troops behind that hill, but we don't know who they are, ours or theirs. Go over and find out." The body felt light; the head detached from the body; the feet were a long way down and carrying the detached body along by their own independent effort. . . .

. . . There was a sniper who followed him along through the edge of the woods and across the open space, Ben saying over and over, "That's too close for comfort," and then he entered the woods and promptly lost his bearings. What's she doing now? he thought. He looked back, but the hill on which the battalion had taken up positions was hidden, and he stood there thinking, When I left the hill I was going due west into the sun, and the mountain was somewhat north of west, and now the sun is on my left when it should be on my right, and what's she doing? He sat down and rolled a cigarette, letting his mind play with the compass directions, and then a comrade he knew as Luke, an organizer from the West Coast who was a battalion scout, came up and said, "Salud!" and he asked him about the directions, watching the hard, kind face with the broken nose, the firm lips, the blue eyes.

Moving through the woods quietly, his rifle at the ready, was good; it was good to be on your own, not attempting to command a squad (what had become of the squad anyhow?), responsible for no one but himself. Then he came on Hal, another battalion scout, who was sitting in the woods, or rather lying on his back with his eyes closed. He had blue eyes, too, Ben noticed, but they were different; he had a soft mouth and a face that looked somewhat out of focus. "What're you up to?" he asked, and Hal said, smiling, "I'm on patrol," so Ben moved on and found the hill and came cautiously behind it. There was another American company there, "But we're pulling right out," the commander said, so he started back through the woods and located Hal again, who was still lying on his back. "How's the patrol going?" Ben said, and Hal said, "Couldn't be better." Goldbricking was the word that came into Ben's mind and he laughed to himself as he went along, thinking, Would they shoot him for that if I said anything, which I won't, but would they shoot him for that?

"Where have you been so long?" Dick said. "I was worried about you."

ALVAH C. BESSIE.

The second part of Mr. Bessie's story will appear next week.

Wiseguy Type

The smart little gent with the shoebutton eyes,
with the folded nose, twice-over, so;
with the diffident smile, and the spectacles
like a hornéd owl, so wise, so wise,

Is a sharpshooter born in a cabaret, to a rattle
of drums, and a spastic shudder, by a pinkish
floozie with powdered thighs,
and a monocled punk in a cutaway,
and a tinhorn song, and a clicking jig,
and a swift, pat fade
and a getaway . . .

Is a wise, wise baby who won't take sides,
playing the middle against the ends;
shuffles the cards with a crack and a flutter,
looks sharp in the dark for omens and friends,
Concedes with a mutter, You may be right,
It may be true but I can't decide;
If the cards are stacked then what does it matter,
If death is the answer, what's the use? . . .
I'm a lonesome wolf in a cold, hard winter,
And I'm standing pat: so it's up to Youse.

HERMAN SPECTOR.

British CP on the IRA

THE Communist Party of Great Britain issued on the anniversary of the death of the great Irish revolutionist, Wolfe Tone, a denunciation of the bombings by the former Irish Republican Army, and called for unity of the labor forces in partitioned Ireland and close cooperation between the Irish and English labor movements against the imperialist splitting tactics of Chamberlain. The statement said in part:

Individual acts against British imperialism, such as have been carried out recently in Britain, cannot achieve the aims of the Irish people. Such individual acts are definitely harmful to the cause of the Irish people as they undermine the sympathy of the working class and progressive sections of the British people, hinder the development of the mass movement in Ireland and Britain, and place a weapon for use against the Irish people in the hands of those who are Ireland's most deadly enemies.

Irish Hearts Are True

IRISH lads who were duped into joining fascist General O'Duffy's legion fighting for Franco learned a lot on the trip to Spain. Back in Dublin the powerful committee fighting for the release of republican volunteer Frank Ryan has received a message from a group of former O'Duffy volunteers pledging themselves to fight for Ryan's delivery from Franco's prison camp. The awakened O'Duffy boys have even sent a note to Franco demanding their former foe's release.

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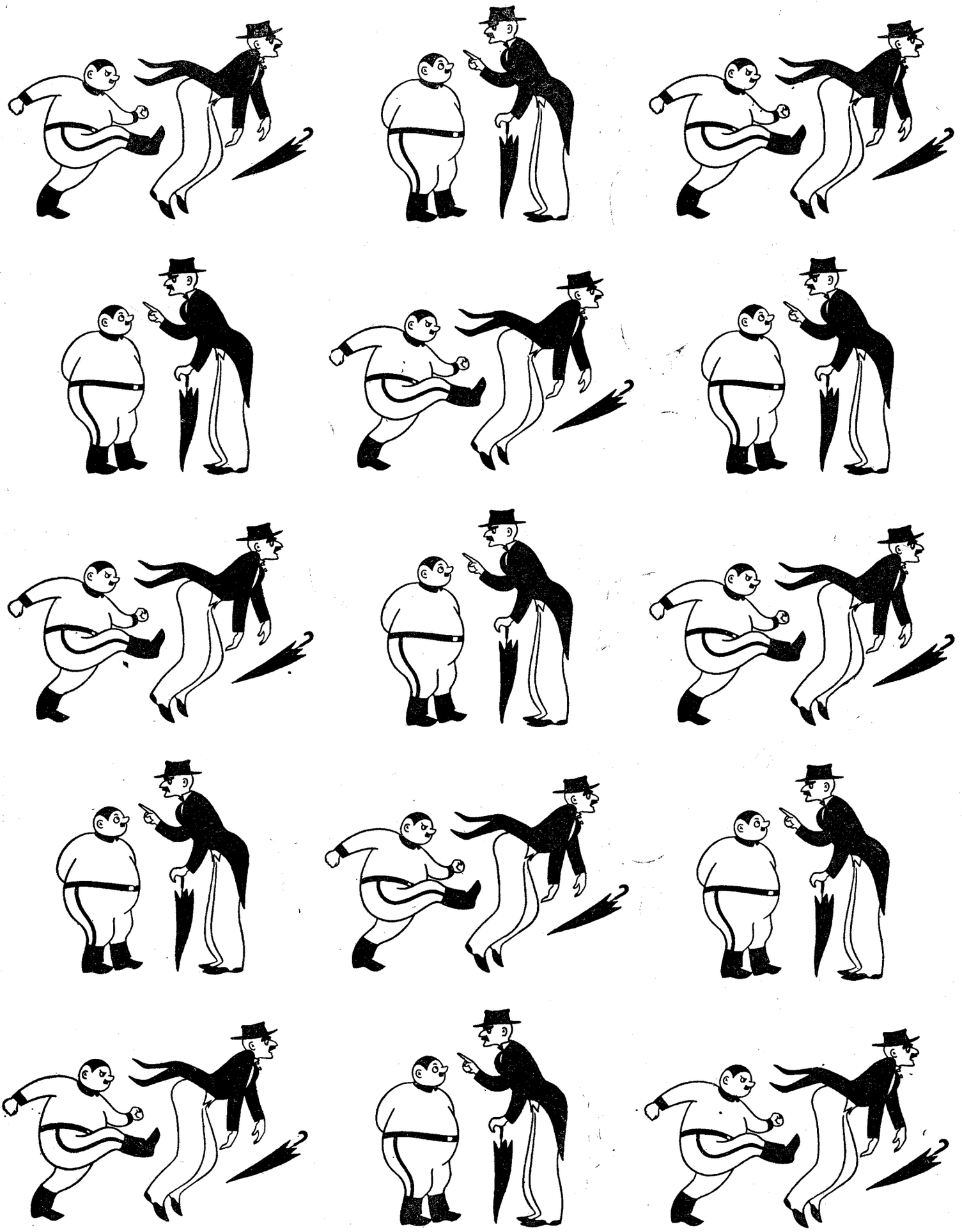

Crockett Johnson

WARNS HITLER NEWS ITEM CHAMBERLAIN WARNS HITLER NEWS ITEM CHAMBERLAIN WARNS HITLER NEWS ITEM CHAMBERLAIN WARNS HITLER NEWS

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Young America Has a Program

Jobs, education, medical care, homes—the Fifth American Youth Congress "legislates" a plan to meet these needs of the nation's young people. Red-baiters rejected.

THIS year's long Fourth of July weekend was no gay summer holiday for the hundreds of young people who worked through the bright days and the hot nights inside huge Manhattan Center. They had a big job to do, these delegates to the Fifth American Youth Congress, and they did it. In committees, in panel meetings, in state delegation caucuses, in sessions of the "Senate" and the "House," in street and corridor and restaurant, they hammered away at the problems of America's youth. Jobs are what five million young people need, jobs and education and medical care and the means to get married and build a home and family. It's the test of our democracy to see that everyone enjoys these things. But youth isn't standing by waiting for a handout; the citizens of tomorrow are out to make democracy work today.

They got many practical lessons in citizenship at their congress. Of course, for many of them these weren't their first lessons. They've had five years in which to learn the ABC's, back from the small beginnings of the American Youth Congress in 1934 through the annual national Congresses of Youth in Cleveland and Detroit and Milwaukee and the pilgrimages to Washington for the American Youth Act, down to this past year when the AYC grew into the broadest federation of national agencies ever seen in this country.

THE FRUITS OF UNITY

What happened at the Fifth Congress shows they've learned their lesson well. In the face of a continuous barrage of Red-baiting from a handful of disrupters on the floor, and its many times amplified echo in the newspapers of the entire nation, the young delegates remained solidly united and went on with their business of mapping out a concrete program to meet the needs of American youth.

Since its birth the Youth Congress has been up front in the tough work of devising those practical measures to make democracy a reality for everyone and of seeing them through the mill of publicity and legislation. In its first two years it carried out the job of making the American public and government realize there was a youth problem. When the NYA and CCC were established the young people introduced the American Youth Act, the first bill in Congress written by, for, and about youth. Pressure for its passage resulted recently in more funds than ever before being appropriated for NYA, and in its reorganization into an independent, non-relief agency under the Federal Security Administration.

While carrying on this work nationally, the AYC strengthened itself by extending roots into local communities. In such fields as health, recreation, education, housing, civil liberties, peace, and employment it has built centers of collaboration throughout the land. Local tories, seeing the results achieved by youth united, have time and again tried to divide and destroy youth councils by name-calling. But the rewards of common action to solve common problems have been too rich for youth to give them up so easily. Experienced in tackling their own community problems, and willing to learn from others, the young "congressmen" came from all types of organizations and from all parts of the country to figure out a national program for youth.

LOANS FOR YOUTH

They passed a lot of bills and resolutions with an intelligence and efficiency unknown to the city councilmen and the state legislators who had the brass to censure them so stupidly. Most important was the resolution that will produce the Homesteaders Act of this new generation. It instructs the AYC Cabinet to submit to the U. S. Congress "a bill to preserve the character, health, and morale of American youth." This bill would set up a revolving, self-liquidating loan fund not exceeding $500,000,000, available to persons between sixteen and thirty. Loans might be made for five purposes: expenses of education, for tuition in colleges, technical schools and theological seminaries and the purchase of books and equipment; medical, dental, and optical treatment; establishment of a home and the purchase of furniture; the purchase of land, seed, feed, and agricultural equipment and the purchase of needed tools and equipment for properly qualified individuals to engage in professions or trades.

"Leaving us idle means loss of talent and skills, loss of valuable, productive manpower, capable of adding to the nation's wealth," said Joseph Cadden, the congress' executive secretary. "A Youth Loan Bank will make it possible for young men and women to borrow funds which they now need to finish their education, to provide medical care, to help them marry, establish a home and family, get a job."

The bill differs from the American Youth Act in many respects, and answers all the objections made to that measure. It is not a "handout," but a loan. And if bankers fear the loan will not be repaid, their faith in the ability of private industry to provide jobs can be questioned. The AYC doesn't claim that this bill alone will solve the entire problem. But it will contribute to the nation's recovery, by passing money for medical care on to doctors, money for groceries on to farmers, and money for other necessities on to labor. It is a corollary to the President's recent proposal for recovery through a $3,860,000,000 program of self-liquidating projects.

Realizing that, as Mrs. Roosevelt phrased it in her speech to the congress, "youth's decisions must be made because they are good for the nation as a whole," and that "no problem is a problem just for youth," the congress went on record for a number of measures in the national interest, for unity of the labor movement, for guaranteed rights to organize and bargain collectively, for the full benefits established by the Wages and Hours Act, for the full implementation of the good-neighbor policy, for expansion of the free educational system, for a federal system of apprenticeship training, for a proposed Youth Brotherhood Week, and for a National Citizenship Program.

That red herrings were fished out of so many waters and thrown onto the floor is a compliment to the organization. The Youth Congress counts. It can't be ignored. So its enemies have been out to get it. On the opening day, a ninety-six-page pamphlet sporting charts and diagrams and photographs landed on the city desks of the newspapers and the floor of the congress. "Is the American Youth Congress a Communistic Front?" was the rhetorical question it asked. It was signed by Murray Plavner and sponsored by six comfortable citizens, among them Victor Ridder, publisher of the *Staats Zeitung,* recently restored to Nazi newsstands by Herr Goebbels. Delegates read it, but thought so little of its "evidence" that none quoted from it to indict the leadership of the congress. Plavner himself, when a member of the Young People's Socialist League, had hung around during the first year of the AYC, graciously offering his services as leader of American youth. Turned down, he left in a huff. When the Socialist Party split, he sided with the Old Guard. Now big money has set him up in offices in 30 Rockefeller Plaza, complete with fancy stationery, shiny mimeographer, and a dummy following. He plays J. B. Matthews to the youth movement.

THE TORIES WALK OUT

As the congress proceeded, more red herrings were peddled to the papers in the form of statements denouncing the congress as Red-controlled, issued locally by sixteen of the New York City Council's prize tory politicians and by remote control from fifty-six Albany legislators. For three days—Saturday, Sunday, and Monday—Meistersinger Alfred Lilienthal, who founded the First Voters League for Landon in 1936, and whose so-called youth organization was the only one to back the Hearst *Journal & American* Youth Citizenship Day on June 26, led a mixed chorus of half a dozen voices in demanding that the Youth Congress "oust from control those leaders who are fellow travelers of the Com-

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Libsohn and Grossman (Photo League)

ON THE FLOOR OF THE FIFTH AMERICAN CONGRESS OF YOUTH. *Young "senators" and "representatives" legislating a program for young America in a joint session at Manhattan Center in New York City.*

munists." Though the voices ranged from the Christian Front and Father Coughlin through the Young Republicans and the Young Americanists League to the Young People's Socialist League, they harmonized beautifully, running the gamut from plain toryism to Trotskyism.

But their sweet songs seduced no one. Their amendment to the Creed of American Youth defeated on Monday morning, the dozen self-styled "patriots" immediately walked out of the congress and took the elevator up to their headquarters in Room 4009 of the Hotel New Yorker, next door. From there, a few hours later, they announced the formation of the Provisional Committee for American Youth, with William Ball of the strikebreaking Young Americanists League in Cleveland as chairman, Lilienthal of the perennial First Voters League as vice-chairman, and pamphleteer Plavner as secretary.

By their overwhelming vote against the disruptive resolutions, it was obvious that none of the delegates were taken in by these tactics. If any were even momentarily swayed by them, the hold was abruptly snapped when Floyd Caridi, there on the pretense of representing the Young Latin American League, later proved a fake, rose to defend the resolution in question and was recognized and denounced by a delegate of the American Jewish Congress as "an open anti-Semite who has advocated beating Jews in the streets of New York." Asked from the floor if he repudiated Coughlinism, Caridi said he did not. That finished him and the resolution. The delegates didn't like Coughlinism. And at once it became damningly clear that the Republicans and Trotskyites had a lot in common with it.

RESOLUTION ON DEMOCRACY

Though they failed to split the congress, its enemies did succeed, with the generous help of the press, in creating the impression outside that Communism was the main issue at the congress. So it was not surprising that a special resolution on the question of dictatorship was introduced on the day following the defeat of the Lilienthal-Ball-Plavner-Caridi resolution which sought to expel from the congress all persons labeled as Communists, fascists, or Nazis. The new resolution was proof—if proof were really needed—that the majority of youth organizations and of American young people are non-Communist. But at the same time it differed most importantly from the first anti-ism resolution in that it accorded full freedom of speech and discussion, and full right of membership, to the Communists as well as all other political groups which are willing to abide by the principles of democratic procedure.

In speaking on the resolution for the Young Communist League, on the floor of the congress, Gil Green made it clear that its wording showed considerable confusion on the nature of Communism. He deplored the fact that no distinction was made between Communism and fascism, for they were lumped together as sources of dictatorial threats, and declared that Communism was the fullest and highest form of democracy. There is no question that the resolution is a bad one. It provides an entering wedge for reactionaries to split the congress at some future time. Nevertheless, the YCL recognized the essential difference between the defeated resolution and the new proposal, and in order not to create an artificial issue of Communism, it voted for the resolution and its condemnation of dictatorship and abridgment of rights, while protesting against the designation of Communism as a dictatorship. But the disrupters will not be defeated and isolated once and for all until progressive forces realize that the Communists are their staunchest allies and defenders of democracy.

VOTE FOR NEW DEAL

Every session of the Congress of Youth expressed an awareness of the importance of training for citizenship. These young citizens showed no apathy in the conduct of their own congress. And they resolved that political

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apathy will not keep the eight million young people eligible to vote for the first time in a Presidential election from taking a stand in their own and the nation's interests. Indifference must be changed into recognition and acceptance of the responsibilities of citizenship. The congress' National Citizenship Program consists of several techniques of dramatizing youth's coming of age and of educating young people to the need for action to satisfy their needs and protect their rights.

Voting machines placed in the lobby of the meeting hall gave these citizens of tomorrow a chance to learn how they worked and to register their stand on some of the key questions of the times. Their vote panicked the *Herald Tribune* into declaring editorially on July 6 that "the congress represents a predominantly radical clientele. This is amply attested by its vote for a third term for the President. . . ." Mr. Roosevelt received 904 votes as favorite 1940 Presidential candidate. Mayor LaGuardia, with fifty-eight, was next. Dewey, *Herald Tribune* candidate, polled fifty-six.

If the oracle of the Republican Party had looked clear-eyed into the credentials report it would have seen another color. The 736 official delegates represented 4,700,000 young people in 450 local and sixty-three national organizations, trade unions, Y's, churches, settlement houses, student groups, peace societies, racial and national organizations, neighborhood and recreational clubs, fraternal orders —these, federated, are the American Youth Congress. And for its new chairman, the congress elected blond, lanky Jack McMichael of Quitman, Ga., chairman of the National Intercollegiate Christian Council, a coordinating body of student YMCA's and YWCA's. Now studying at Union Theological Seminary, McMichael has just returned from an eight months' study of China and India. Joseph Cadden was reelected executive secretary and Harriet Pickens of the National Business and Professional Women's Council of the YWCA, treasurer.

MILTON MELTZER.

A Tip for Hearst

ONCE upon a time Hearst stock was sold to the public at $25 a share. Employees were let in "on the ground floor" at $24 a share, with easy time payments (save as you go, you know). The stock skidded down to $5, made a slight recovery to $6, and was ascending when the Newspaper Guild strike hit the Chicago papers. Now you can buy all you want over the counter at $3.50. Guild strikers, meeting Homer Guck, publisher emeritus of the *Herald & Examiner,* on the picketline, called his attention to the skidding Hearst stock. "You're telling me!" he exclaimed. "Maybe you think I'm not damn glad I got rid of all mine before you guys started striking."—*Bulletin from the Hearst Strike Committee of the Chicago American Newspaper Guild.*

Visit Gay Germany!

Joseph Schrank does some volunteer copywriting for the Reich Tourist Bureau. The novelties of Naziland.

IN THE New York Sunday *Times* travel section I noticed a bright little article about the attractions of travel in Germany this summer. It must have been prepared by the Reich Tourist Bureau. "Reich's Bid to Visitors" the article is headlined. And the subhead goes, "Traditional Attractions of the Season Are Enhanced by New Facilities."

So far so good. But I hardly think the article itself does full justice to the unusual attractions and delightful novelties that Germany will provide this summer for the eager tourist or even the world-weary globe-trotter. In an effort to remedy this deficiency, I have prepared the following piece of copy, following the original as closely as is consistent with my desire to improve it. The Reich Tourist Bureau is welcome to use it—at no charge whatsoever.

REICH'S BID TO VISITORS

Traditional Attractions of the Season Enhanced by Delightful Novelties

Travel through Germany is at its flowery best in spring and early summer. Forest retreats and mountain chalets are opening for the season. This year, as in recent years, these romantic old world retreats will have the added charm of exclusiveness, as of course only Aryans are permitted—that is, Aryans who are not Catholics, liberals, democrats, Socialists, trade union members, or brunettes. The wise traveler will carry, together with his passport, a copy of his family tree.

New roads and old ones, all well marked, lead to the Black Forest, the Harz district, the Bohemian woods, to walled villages with picture book houses. Here and there a historic synagogue burned to the ground or some fine old example of Catholic Church architecture, its windows broken by stones, promises an adventure in medieval moods.

The Rhine, with its Mouse Tower and Lorelei legend, its spotless white steamers serving hot meals and native wine, will lure many tourists anxious to get a birdseye view of riverside villages. And travelers will no longer be annoyed by the singing of the *Lorelei* which is now prohibited as the poem was written by Heinrich Heine, a non-Aryan long dead. The Rhine trip provides the extra attraction of a stopover at Godesberg, an enchanting resort famed for its linden trees, its *Kartofelsalat,* and its legends, one of the most amusing of which concerns a flying statesman who dropped out of the skies one day carrying an umbrella and who lost his trousers here.

New trips are available to historic old places like Praha and Pilsen, and travelers will be pleased to learn that this year no additional visas are necessary because of the fact that these places have insisted on becoming a part of Germany. Of course, cities like Munich and Vienna will always retain their charm and gay abandon. Almost any afternoon one is likely to see groups of singing youths and girls goosestepping gaily through the streets, throwing rocks through non-Aryan shop windows, gleefully beating up unwary strangers who fail to give the Hitler salute, and making merry in similar characteristic ways.

Many visitors prefer the rustic charm of little towns to the more lavish entertainment of great cities. For them the little fairytale villages, each with its ancient marketplace, its pretty red-tiled roof tops, and its library, Jewish orphan asylum, or home for the aged converted into a "Brown House" for Storm Troopers, will be a never ending source of joy. And one soon learns to fall in with the quaint custom of the natives who greet you, not with a handshake and a smile, but with stiffly outstretched arm pointing straight at your nose and the words "Heil Hitler!" Bavaria has long exercised its own special lure with its snow-capped mountains, rushing streams, and whispering pine forests. And if one is lucky, one might even catch a glimpse of Der Fuhrer's picturesque mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden—a favorite haunt of foreign statesmen seeking retirement.

For the sportsman, there will be regattas on the North Sea and the Baltic, a horse show at Aachen, tennis matches with international stars at the well known spas, automobile races in several centers, and the usual sports events in the concentration camps such as running the gauntlet of clubs for elderly men and clay pigeon shooting with live young political prisoners for clay pigeons. Soon music lovers will be converging on Salzburg for the festival of music. Of course Reinhardt, Toscanini, Bruno Walter, and all the other great artists will be absent because of a slight misunderstanding, but this need not dampen any music lover's enthusiasm. The more vigorously inclined may wander over mountain trails with a rucksack and, weary at night, seek repose in one of the many quaint little inns with their old-fashioned feather beds, sloping ceilings, and dictographs installed under each bed by the Gestapo.

No detail of the traveler's comfort has been overlooked by the ever thoughtful authorities. A delightful example of this is the ruling that no one coming out of Germany is allowed to have more than 30 German marks —about $10—in his pocket. Any money in excess of this remains in the hands of the courteous frontier guard. So, you see, economy, which always spoils any vacation, is discouraged.

All in all, travelers in Germany this summer are assured a delightful visit.

JOSEPH SCHRANK.

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Hitler's Pal, Doc

Los Angeles tries a Nazi sexual pervert, extortioner, and anti-Semite. What the movie camera caught.

Los Angeles.

THIS city, with its share of bundists and bizarre cults, is being treated to the most repulsive of them all in the trial of Dr. Joe Jeffers on moral charges and attempted extortion. Dr. Jeffers is an anti-Semitic Southern preacher who expounds three nights weekly at his Kingdom Temple. A recent item in Pearson and Allen's "Washington Merry-Go-Round" revealed that one Dr. Joe Jeffers had just returned from Germany to spread Jew-baiting propaganda. The squib had immediate effect in Los Angeles. District Attorney Buron Fitts, coming up for reelection in 1940, heeded the protests of citizens and put his ace investigator, a smooth character named Vincent Higgins, on the trail of Dr. Jeffers.

Hearing that Jeffers was planning to rent a room in the spacious appartment which he and his wife, Zella Joy, shared, Higgins lost no time in becoming "Mr. Casey," a wealthy Hollywood writer, and joining the menage. Higgins had a tip that the evangelist planned to burn down Kingdom Temple for the insurance. Sleuth Higgins wired the whole flat with dictaphones and stationed three movie cameramen nearby to come shooting at the shout of "Mahatma Gandhi."

One night in March Higgins brought some liquor home with him; the three and Higgins' girl companion had several lusty rounds. The little, seamy-faced preacher began to boast of his amorous prowess, which had been advanced considerably in his recent acquaintance with the newest techniques developed in Nazi Germany. Dr. Jeffers vowed he would start a Love School at $100 the semester, and offered to give Higgins a sample demonstration. The party adjourned to the Jeffers bedroom where the Professor of Love and his wife proceeded to demonstrate. "Mahatma Gandhi!" yelled Higgins and the lensmen popped in.

The film's evidence brought Jeffers and Zella Joy into court on three charges of sexual perversion and attempted extortion. The last charge arose out of Mrs. Jeffers' quaint custom of enticing men to her room, where they would be surprised by the good doctor, full of moral outrage which could only be assuaged by money changing hands. The trial, one of the most degraded matters ever aired in court, brought out Dr. Jeffers' political life. "I'm Semitic myself," he confided to this reporter. "I'm not against all Jews; we're really all Jews. But I'm against Bolshevik Jews. They caused the Jew's downfall in Germany. I want to save my people from Communistic Jews. I'm not a Jew-baiter. How could I be when I'm a Jew myself?" In another moment Jeffers boasts of his pure "Christian Anglo-Saxon" origin in Alabama.

The evangelist came to Los Angeles after an exciting career in Texas. Quite mysteriously he left for a forty thousand mile tour of Europe, which couldn't have been financed with evangelist's collections. It was established in the trial that an Italian friend, one Benito Mussolini, and a German, Joseph Goebbels, picked up the doctor's checks. "I stayed with Hitler's brother in Germany," he said. He put up with Mussolini in Italy and reported that Il Duce was the shrewder of the axis twins. Coming back, he attempted to smuggle some French postcards, a camera, and a load of expensive perfume past the customs. Guards caught the camera and he paid $250. The most important piece of smuggled goods was the latest angle in Jew-baiting, which he promptly put to work in Los Angeles.

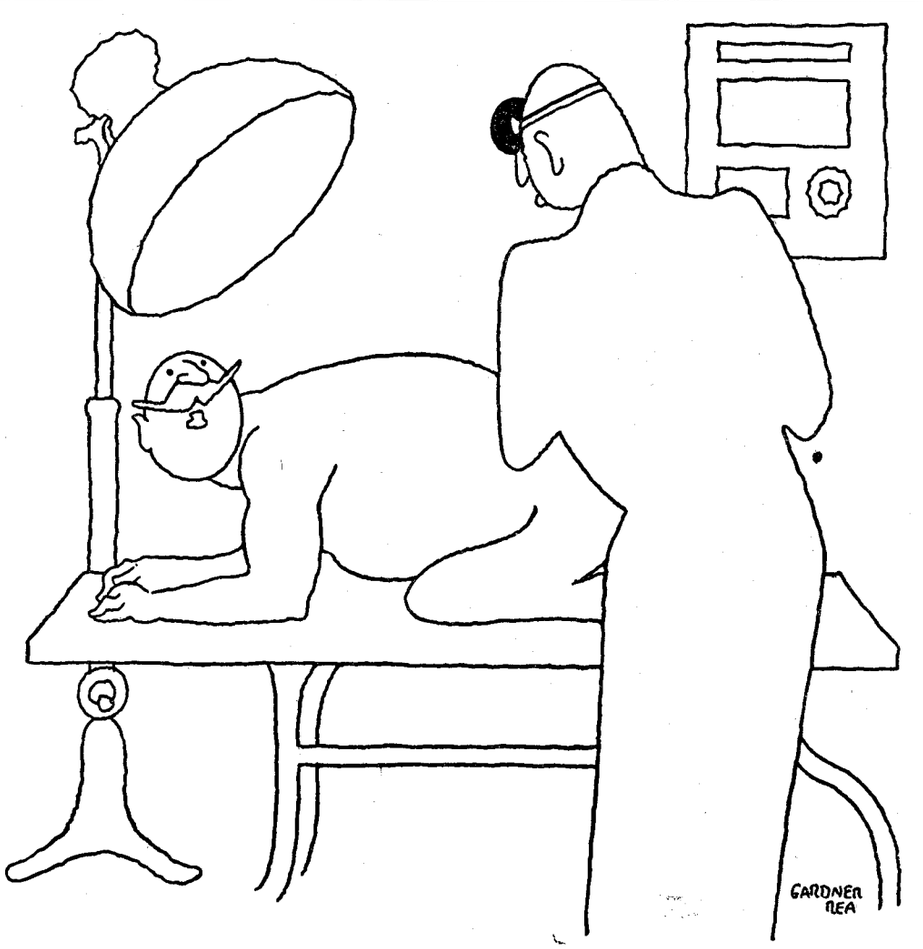
The little preacher soon became a big man in West Coast Nazi circles, rising enough to be included in a conference of Nazi leaders and Gen. George Van Horn Moseley. So thrilled was Dr. Jeffers that he began filling up his weekly paper, the *Kingdom Voice,* with catchy slogans like, "General Moseley for President. Can He Succeed Rosenfeld?" between reprints of the "Protocols of Zion" and the spurious statement of Benjamin Franklin on Jews. General Moseley also inspired the little man to announce a weekly coast-to-coast radio program to be called *The March Ahead of Time.* In his anti-Semitic work he was aided by the wealthy Mrs. W. B. Busch, chief distributor of Nazi literature coming in from Canada.

West Coast Nazis wish they had never seen the clever doctor. LOU SELIGSON.

Youth Crimes in Germany

ONE of Nazism's boasts is that it produces a superior type of youth, wholesome, athletic, clear-eyed Aryan boys and girls. The facts are somewhat different. An editorial in the July 7 issue of the *New World,* organ of the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, says:

> The German Reich Year Book . . . points out that sex crimes have increased fourfold in the last four years. *Der Deutsche Weg,* another German paper, says that from 1936 to 1937, youths condemned for sexual crimes increased from 1,463 to 2,374. In the first three months of the year 1938, 109 girls were condemned for child murder. Twenty-eight youths of fourteen years of age were sentenced for criminal homicide in 1937. . . . The Nazi pagan education is bearing fruit already.



Gardner Rea

MAJOR NERTZ OF THE FASCIST SHIRTS

"May I seize this moment to deplore our mounting national debt?"

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William Gropper

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Chamberlain Maneuvers

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN'S statement in the House of Commons last Monday is another net to catch the wind. True, it is the sharpest and most specific declaration that he has yet made. But nowadays the test of British policy consists of whether or not a statement by a government official leaves the door open for appeasement. In the case of Chamberlain, the latest statement leaves the door wide enough open to create a draft. It is not enough to isolate one paragraph in which the British prime minister appears to be giving the Nazis unequivocal warning. The fact is that he spoke of "a clearer atmosphere" in which "possible improvements" in the position of Danzig "might be discussed." And he cited Hitler's truculent speech of April 28, in which the Fuhrer canceled the German-Polish non-aggression pact, as evidence of the Nazi government's readiness to enter into discussions. What this means is that Chamberlain is now engaged in putting the same kind of behind-the-scenes pressure on Poland as he put on Czechoslovakia last year.

The Poles, as well as citizens of every nation interested in peace, must take a sober view of the latest British maneuvers. *The truth is that the world is suspicious of Chamberlain so long as his leadership prevents Great Britain from concluding the Anglo-Soviet pact.* This is the crux of the matter. Progressives everywhere measure the sincerity of the J'aime-Berlin-Halif-axis by the progress of the Anglo-Soviet pact.

Here is precisely where the position of Danzig is critical. War is made more imminent by the British stalling on the Soviet pact. The propaganda of the British Foreign Office—which is relayed to American readers via the New York *Times* and the news agencies—is seeking to create the impression that the Soviet Union is quibbling, though Winston Churchill has declared the Soviet proposals preferable. Chamberlain and Bonnet are hoping that their dilatory tactics will dissipate sentiment for a Soviet pact and disorganize the anti-Munich forces. Only the ability of the Polish people to resist their own traitors in high places, together with resolute pressure from the British and French peoples for a Soviet alliance, and revision of American neutrality legislation along positive lines, can avert catastrophe.

Before Congress Adjourns

IT'S hot in Washington. But it's hotter still in the world where the fires of war blaze on two continents. Tory songbirds are warbling, "Home, Sweet Home," but there's much work to be done before the home of the average American will be secure against the perils that sap its foundations. After losing battles on three fronts, WPA, neutrality, and control of the value of the dollar, the administration, by a swift counter-attack, last week recovered lost ground on dollar control when continuation of President Roosevelt's emergency powers was voted into law. Now the job is to repeat this on the issues of WPA and neutrality.

An isolationist bloc of senators, estimated to number as high as thirty-four, is threatening to filibuster neutrality revision to death. The filibuster is never an edifying example of the democratic process. And where the peace of America and the world is concerned, it might be better to leave the filibustering to Hitler and Mussolini. As for the American people, the Gallup poll showed as far back as April that 57 percent of them favor revision of neutrality legislation to permit the sale of war materials to Britain and France in case of war. In other words, the majority of the voters want something like the original version of the Bloom cash-and-carry bill.

But the New Deal must do more than merely recover lost ground if it is to provide the leadership that can assure victory in 1940. At least four other measures require action before Congress adjourns: the President's lending program for self-liquidating projects, the new Wagner $800,000,000 Housing Bill, the Mead bill to assist little business with capital and credit, and the Lee bill to extend aid to tenant farmers by providing federally insured mortgages. Then there are some bills on which inaction would be cause for rejoicing—the proposals for amending the National Labor Relations Act and the various attacks on civil liberties and the foreign born.

Franco Pays His Bills

THE third anniversary of the Spanish war finds Mussolini's son-in-law, Count Galeazzo Ciano, on a trip to Spain—and for more than pleasure. Il Duce's relative is also foreign minister of Italy and he comes on business connected with the Rome-Berlin military pact. The collector is ringing the doorbell.

It is a weird house—Spain today—three years after the generals rose up. Look at the picture. On the one hand the brigands are dividing the swag. The Nazi firm HIMSA now possesses a virtual monopoly of all the peninsula's exports and imports. It gets 3 percent on all exports and 1 percent on all imports. Up to July 1938 these profits amounted to 120,000,000 pesetas. Nazi control leaves little comfort for the Spanish industrialists. In the Basque country they squeeze the native industry to the wall—particularly in production of wood pulp and mining. According to Ramon de la Sota, secretary of the Basque delegation to the United States, the great industrial area of Bilbao *is working* feverishly — producing munitions for Germany.

Franco is in an unhappy spot: the hated *extranjero* swaggers over the lot, takes industry—and jobs—from the Spaniard. That accentuates the differences between the Falangists and the Requetes. The latter want their king and throw dark Latin looks at the arrogant invaders. The Falangists come to blows with the "traditionalists" in the Carlist provinces of Guipuzcoa and Navarra. "Viva el rey" clashes with "Abajo el rey." Drumhead trials continue in gory profusion. Thousands of republicans are sent to death; terror everywhere. Yet Asturians defy the enemy in mountain passes; sabotage spreads.

Poor, unhappy Spain—but Iberia has seen hard times before and fires smolder long below the Pyrenees.

The "Nation's" Boomerang

THE *Nation,* after sagely sucking its thumb for weeks in regard to the phony "General Krivitsky" and his anti-Soviet articles in the *Saturday Evening Post,* has finally decided to take a stand. In an editorial in the July 8 issue it faces firmly both ways. The *Nation* editorial is, in fact, a masterpiece of on-the-one-hand, on-the-other reasoning, triumphantly evading issues and dripping self-righteousness from every pore.

NEW MASSES revealed that Isaac Don Levine, veteran concocter of anti-Soviet fantasies and former Hearst handyman, collaborated with "Krivitsky" and did the actual writing. What of that? says the *Nation;* "thousands of articles are ghosted." But what NEW MASSES disclosed was that it was *Isaac Don Levine* who did the ghosting. Does that name smell just as sweet to the *Nation* as Tom Smith or John Jones? Is there no particular significance in the fact that this fascist journalist, whose libels on the USSR are notorious, did the job which

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Shmelka Ginsberg, alias "General Krivitsky," was unable to do for himself?

In its July 4 issue NEW MASSES published a lengthy editorial article which proved by a detailed examination of the "Krivitsky" series that they were a potpourri of crude falsehoods and blatant inconsistencies. We demonstrated, *inter alia,* that "Krivitsky" and Levine lied when they asserted that the Barcelona uprising in May 1937 was organized by the Soviet OGPU, that they falsified speeches of Stalin, Molotov, and Litvinov, and that their major premise of a Soviet-Nazi alliance was completely refuted by world events. Ignoring all this—and ignoring, too, the *New Republic's* exposure of the bogus general—the *Nation* concludes that NEW MASSES has not yet "seriously and thoroughly" discussed "Krivitsky's" story.

But perhaps the *Nation* ought to say a few words—even if not too serious or thorough—about the validity of its own position. For if "Krivitsky" and Levine are right about the Barcelona rebellion, the *Nation* was wrong when it placed the blame for this Franco-inspired uprising on the Trotskyist POUM and certain Anarchist elements. And if "Krivitsky" and Levine are right in charging that Stalin is about to embrace Hitler, then the *Nation* has been wrong in telling its readers that the USSR is seeking to create an anti-aggression front. There's a boomerang in the *Nation's* words.

Incidentally, the cause of genuine liberalism might be better served by inquiring just why William Bullitt, American ambassador to France, arranged for Ginsberg's entry into this country. Perhaps the ambassador and certain officials of the State and Labor Departments have never read the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement which bars from American soil representatives of groups plotting the overthrow of the Soviet government.

A Matter of Life or Death

MOST of the world's organized workingmen want unity with the Soviet trade unions. The tragic lessons of disunity have been learned on all continents—among the rank and file. But certain of their leaders seem to need a concentration camp to learn the fundamentals of anti-fascism. That's how it seems at Zurich, where delegates of the eighteen million members of the International Federation of Trade Unions are conferring.

A vote of forty-six to thirty-seven defeated the British proposal to resume talks with the Soviet Union workingmen in accordance with the decision adopted in London three years ago. The British, French, Mexican, and Norwegian delegates voted for the motion; Bill Green's Man Friday—Robert J. Watt—opposed it violently. New Zealand and Argentina, as well as Canada's delegate, would have voted yes—but they hadn't arrived at Zurich when the vote was rushed through.

Walter Schevenals, general secretary of the IFTU, refused to read an appeal smuggled out of underground Austria, signed by 97,000 workers, urging unity. He wanted to "authenticate" the document—even though the names of well established trade-union leaders were down in black and white. It is important to note that the delegates of the four countries voting for unity represented 9,300,000 workers—three million more than the delegates of the eleven countries opposed. Leon Jouhaux, outstanding French labor leader, warned reactionaries at the sessions that "labor unity will assure peace. If we want peace, then we must have unity. This is not a matter of mere ideology. It is a problem of peace or war, life or death."

Huey's Heirlooms

BEFORE he sailed away on the magic carpet, Huey Long left a bunch of jars full of thieves around in the Louisiana State Capitol. Now that the New Deal is pouring boiling water in the jars the screams can be heard up and down the land. The eminent educator, Dr. James Monroe Smith of Louisiana State Hueyversity, was ignobly seized in Canada after his prudent departure from the storied halls of learning. The good doctor had been indulging a million dollars of university funds in the sweaty extra-curricular activity of trying to corner wheat on the Chicago exchange. Gov. Richard Leche was taken with lumbar twinges when opposition papers printed pictures of an LSU truck delivering materials for use in constructing a home for one of Leche's friends; and a nestful of smaller pickpockets took it on the lam with the sick governor when the WPA investigation began. The stink plainly called for an Honest Man. And who turned up but Earl K. Long, brother to the late Kingfish, a little nervous but not actually caught with his hand in the till. To make the picture complete, the man most responsible for the blowoff, which originated in Pearson and Allen's "Washington Merry-Go-Round," is ex-Senator James A. Noe, who was unable to say no to Standard Oil when he was governor for one of those Louisiana short terms. All of these characters claim allegiance to the pure principles of Huey P. Long, if this helps to simplify matters for you.

It was plain that to find an honest man in Louisiana one had to be imported. Through Attorney General Frank Murphy we will get a glimpse into the rest of Huey's jars. On the basis of a complete investigation by the Department of Justice, the labor and progressive forces of Louisiana will have an opportunity for housecleaning.

NAACP Conference

THE Thirtieth Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, held at Richmond, Va., was built around three major events of the past year. One was the decision of the United States Supreme Court in the Lloyd Gaines Case, upholding the right of Negro citizens to study in Southern colleges and universities. The second was the emergence of Marian Anderson as the symbol of Negro culture in struggle with chauvinism and race hatred. And the third was the action of the Negroes in Miami who defied rotten legislation and Ku Klux terror, to exercise their franchise.

The fact that the President's wife was there (accompanied in spirit by Maury Maverick, John L. Lewis, and Albert Einstein, among the many who sent the conference greetings) spotlighted the cooperation of white progressives in Negro affairs.

Traditionally the spokesman for the Negro middle classes, intellectuals, and professionals, the NAACP supported federal assistance to education, the Wagner health program, and the anti-poll-tax fight. Resolutions were passed against anti-Semitism and against the attack upon WPA. The Gavagan Anti-Lynching Bill received special emphasis.

The conference passed an unfortunate, though not unanimous, resolution to amend the Wagner act so that unions discriminating against Negroes shall be denied its privileges. Had the NAACP achieved closer relations with the labor movement, it might have avoided this. To lay the Wagner act open to amendment on this ground is dangerous. Discrimination against Negroes can and must be eliminated within the ranks of labor by the action of all progressives.

Return the Heroes

THE Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion has returned fifteen hundred veterans to families, health, and useful civilian life, through the contributions of American democrats. But today there are fifty veterans totally disabled or undergoing hospitalization; seventeen still in Franco prisons; and ninety-five waiting in France and Cuba. The Friends are at the moment two weeks in arrears on the maintenance cost of the French contingent, which threatens our boys with internment in one of the vile Mediterranean concentration camps. Three thousand dollars is needed within the week to keep these brave men from becoming victims of our neglect. That amount and $7,000 more before August must be contributed by us, by everyone in this fight for freedom, as our ransom against death, our small wreath for the men who stormed hell. Help now! Address the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, 125 West 45th St., N. Y. C.

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AN EDITORIAL ARTICLE

America Fights for WPA

The tory Relief Act is already kicking back at its sponsors. A developing battle which has its meaning for labor and progressive unity, for 1940 and recovery.

Two weeks ago madness reigned in the House of Representatives. Bull-headed tories overran the lower chamber, defeated three New Deal bills, and reached the peak of their frenzy in the discussion of the relief budget. Progressives were outnumbered and outshouted; many were buffeted into submission. The good work done by the Senate in amending the first House proposals was almost completely undone.

Two days after the new budget went into effect America began to wake up, began to see what had been put over on it under the shadow of the wisecracking and reactionary hysteria that had prevailed the week before.

At this writing more than 100,000 building trades workers are on strike throughout the nation. In New York, in Chicago, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Cleveland, and Rochester, in dozens of American cities, with returns still coming in from outlying districts, workers on WPA and in private industry are resisting the amendment which calls for the abolition of the prevailing wage system. The strike that began with the walkout of twenty thousand workers employed on the North Beach airport near the World's Fair in New York has grown and is growing into a protest that has set the progressive forces of the whole nation into motion.

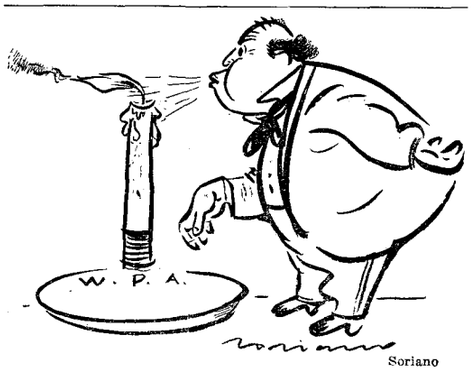
The abolition of the prevailing wage was the defection that was felt first, but the present protest is by no means limited to that. The Workers Alliance and the CIO are backing bills to withdraw all the Woodrum restrictions. In the state of Washington WPA workers on all projects are threatening to strike not only against the loss of the prevailing wage but against all the amendments. In New York WPA teachers are considering a walkout. In many places teamsters and truck-drivers have called sympathy demonstrations. Small business men—seeing their customers unable to meet bills and being forced to cut down future purchases—are making themselves heard. Small contractors, fearing the competition of the larger firms if wages are cut, are joining their employees in protest. Liberals throughout the country sense a threat to recovery, a Republican maneuver to dish up a little chaos to pave the way for 1940.

But the movement at present is still getting its impetus from the drive against elimination of prevailing wages. The union standard in the building industries is one of American labor's most precious gains, a sturdy stanchion of our labor movement. In an industry where security does not exist, where work is often dependent on such variables as weather, real estate booms, and sectional economic conditions, workers forced wages up to a point where they would find some protection against layoffs and business slumps. They went on hundreds of strikes throughout the country, and their success became the success of the entire American Federation of Labor, their unions the AFL's backbone.

This is the second strike over the wages paid WPA workers in the building trades. In 1935, when WPA first came into being in New York City, workers were sent out on government projects at wages lower than those established by the AFL unions. Sensing the probabilities of employers using the government standards to lower their own, the AFL called its WPA members out on strike. An East Side slum clearance project and an uptown swimming pool were abandoned. Stoppage on other jobs was threatened if the administration proved intractable. But the strike was shortly won, and Gen. Hugh Johnson, then New York's WPA administrator, was forced to give in. Soon afterward Harry Hopkins instructed all state administrators to introduce the prevailing wage on construction jobs. This was done without jacking up wages but simply by reducing working time so that the worker got his regular hourly union wages for the time he put in. As WPA grew, union wages spread to other fields.

The principle has remained in effect for the past four years. Each Congress has maintained prevailing wages, written the provision into its relief bill. Employers have been unable to use the government as a standard to justify jettisoning their wage scales.

The failure to provide for the prevailing wage is the immediate issue of the present strikes, but it is not the only thing wrong with the Relief Act. After August 31, two million WPA workers will find their incomes lowered anywhere from $5 to $20 a month. Between now and the end of August 700,000 will be dropped from the rolls for at least a month. The slick rotation plan that euphemistically calls for a month's release for all who have been working a year and a half not only means that thousands will be eased out altogether but reduces yearly earnings by slightly less than 10 percent. Under the generous plan of eliminating geographical wage differentials, the miserably paid workers in the South will gain little, but the wages of those in the North and West—where the cost of living is far higher—will be made to conform with Southern standards. This is done in the name of equality.



Soriano

Around these issues is growing a resisting unity that need have no limits. It is significant that the AFL top leadership was aroused early in the fight, for they slept soundly during the Woodrum bill hearings. They have taken in, for the present at least, the supreme lesson that a threat to the wages of one section of workers is a threat to the wages of others.

Other sections of organized labor have already been heard from. The CIO and the Workers Alliance support the AFL strikers and call for more drastic changes in the relief act. The Alliance has drawn up a four point program to which all progressives can give unequivocal support. It calls for:

1. The restoration of the prevailing wage.
2. Restoration of the Federal Theater.
3. Elimination of the provision that those on WPA for eighteen months or more be dropped.
4. Elimination of the wage revisions which mean drastic reductions in most large cities.

The need for even greater progressive unity is underscored by the united front thrown up by reaction. The New York *Herald Tribune,* which is nothing if not candid, has used the present situation to say what has been close to its heart for a long time—"Abolish the WPA." The *Times,* which never speaks so harshly, has said the same thing in its usual dull innuendo. And from inside the WPA, New York administrator Lieut. Col. Brehon Somervell says, "We hope they'll all go off. That would be grand. Then there would be no WPA."

These are the issues, the forces on both sides of a major democratic struggle. Curtailing WPA means slowing down the whole machinery of economic recovery, the undermining of buying power, which quickly finds its way to groups seemingly untouched at present — merchants, small manufacturers, farmers, professionals. The fight that is scheduled for 1940 needs not only the economic well being of the people that is wrapped up in WPA but the welding of popular groups in support of security and employment. No American can fail to move into these ranks.

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Jonathan Peck: A Commonplace Tragedy

A man of good will finds his life and dreams shattered against the adamant rocks of a summer resort.

JONATHAN PECK looked out the office window to the ledge where friendly pigeons deposited eggs, pieces of string, and bits of yesterday's newspaper.

He envied the pigeons their careless freedom, the casual way in which they took off and landed. To his ears their repetitious cooing, (reminiscent of Uncle Henry's daily assault on "morning mouth" via the gargle) was as beautiful as any bird call that Audubon had heard.

Wrapped in foggy heat, tantalized by the pigeons, Jonathan Peck was ill-equipped to dispatch any of the tasks so neatly cataloged on his desk. Even the stapling machine, with its precise click and miraculous efficiency, failed to transmit its usual electric thrill. He wore life on his shoulders like an over-stuffed knapsack.

I have worked now for eleven months and two weeks, thought Jonathan. I have dutifully paid my dentist, grocer, butcher, and all except two of my gas bills, which is why I eat in cafeterias. I have been kind to my wife, and also to my mother who lives in South Brooklyn. I played sick once on a Thursday and went to the movies instead of the office. I hate the subway like any good citizen. Boss or no boss, why shouldn't I spend the next half hour daydreaming about my vacation?

With that, Jonathan's day picked up immensely. He began to review his plans. He felt wings, as soft and downy as those of the pigeons, sprout from his shoulder blades. He pictured himself soaring over the Chrysler Building, his sleek body flashing in the sun, while far below on 42nd Street an admiring crowd, held in check by police ropes, gathered to watch Peck the Magnificent.

Then he became Hawkeye the Trailblazer, ear close to the ground to catch the warlike sound of Indians. Cowering behind him was Colonel Pettigrew, a British tory cad and a redcoat to boot. Aha, thought Hawkeye, quite irrelevantly, I have you behind the eight ball, Colonel Pettigrew! Maureen O'Sullivan sees through you! She prefers the leafy love of Hawkeye!

SILENT UPON A PEAK

At home Peck took an organizational approach to the question of mountains or seashore. Mountains! And he knew the spots, the hidden spots nestling in the furthest reaches of the Adirondacks! Peachdown Inn, Peachdown the unspoiled, the virgin paradise!

Peck set about burning his bridges. This was to be a complete vacation. A real *rest*. No worries. No meetings. None of this Hitler-Mussolini-Mikado business. No Chamberlain. No wide-awake periodicals. No thoughts. Just a loaf of bread, a jug of Dr. Brown's Celery Tonic, and a Sears-Roebuck Catalog.

Peck glanced at the *Daily Worker* which lay in his lap like a rebuke. *Daily Worker?* Hmmmmmm! Peck was no slave to tradition, no prisoner of conscience. He would fight down that annoying feeling of dependence. A vacation means getting away from it all. And so, with a flourish of supreme bravado, Peck wrote a forthright note to his *Daily Worker* carrier, cancelling the delivery until he should return from the Nirvana of Peachdown Inn.

When Peck arrived at his upstate haunt, he immediately began to rough it. He let his beard grow and allowed mosquitoes to feed unmolested on the broad expanse of his knees. He looked at the sky every morning after breakfast, and if it was cloudy enough, he predicted, with a mouth puckered by imaginary tobacco juice, that it would rain before the day was over. He blazed new trails through poison ivy country, and got half way up one mountain—all in the space of the first day. At night he set out to explore the vast and stilly forest, but a few feet beyond the tennis court his imagination convinced him that he was stepping on small frogs—and he *couldn't* do that! To top the night off, he dared moon-madness by sitting unprotected beneath the open sky.

MAN BITES DOG

Next morning he could find no other paper to read at breakfast except the *Daily Views*. The love answers were swell. It was pleasant to read about the guy who got embarrassed for a dollar, and the little lad who said, "Do you ever send them to the dentist?" when his grandma's teeth dropped out during a horse laugh. Very human indeed, thought Peck, very entertaining.

At lunch there were no other papers. So he read the *View's* again, gazing for five minutes at a picture of a crying tot who was quoted as saying, "I want my daddy who chopped mama's head off with an axe, shot Cousin Emily, and poured H_2SO_4 over the apple I gave teacher." Hmmmmm, thought Peck, human interest.

That afternoon he went one-quarter way up the mountain. At night he read the *Evening Telephone* (*another* paper) over dinner (served rustic fashion with nail heads sticking up out of the seat). The headline startled him:

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES EXPAND
AFTER NEW SCHOOL CUTS

That *was* a honey! He spent the next twenty minutes trying to figure it out with pencil and paper. He reached various metaphysical conclusions, one of which dealt with perpetual motion, and then called it a night.

LIEBESTRAUM

A night? And what a night! That was the first night that Peck began to dream. He dreamed that three Social Justice salesmen were hiding under his bed while Hoover marched into Washington on a pink horse. The horse had a face like Garner. In fact it *was* Garner.

In the morning he began to have hallucinations. He kept seeing the map of Europe before his eyes—and the map kept changing. When he dozed he dreamed that Mussolini was marching into Tunisia, Nice, Paris, and the 11th A.D., Manhattan. No matter where he fled in the woods he heard a voice saying, "Here y'are, folks! Read all about it! Millions starve in Soviet Union as collective farmers distribute record harvest to the people at large!"

When the next day's *Evening Telephone* featured a headline reading:

NEW DEAL LOSES ON ALL FRONTS
EXCEPT NATIONALLY

Peck began to sob without let or hindrance, and futilely banged his spoon on the table. Then he jumped to his feet, a broken man, every nerve hot and raw, and howled, "Hasn't anybody in Peachdown Inn got a copy of the *Daily Worker?*"

There was a long silence during which the casual observor could hear a noodle drop with a dull thud on someone's lap. Jonathan had aged perceptibly the last few days he had passed at Peachdown. His temples were graying, and his cheeks flapped against his teeth. His complexion had turned a peculiar mauve with blue polka dots, and his eyes looked like a misprint. Someone whispered to his neighbor, "Poor Peck! He's been playing too hard. He ought to go to work for a couple of weeks."

ODDS BODKINS!

Then a voice came from within Peck. It was not Peck's voice, but the voice of his conscience combined with his intelligence. It was strong, vibrant, and triumphant, carrying with it the conviction of the inevitable, the authority of thunder.

"Jonathan Peck," said the voice, "you are being punished by history. For two weeks you will suffer here at Peachdown Inn. You were told before you left that you could get a Vacation Subscription to the *Daily* and *Sunday Worker* for 25 cents per week (plus 3 cents for each extra day). You were also warned that this offer does not cover mailings to Manhattan, Bronx, Canada, or Foreign, but this does not concern you. You were told that you could get the Daily wherever you go. But you did not send in your sub!

"*You can't win, Jonathan Peck.* But future Jonathan Pecks can learn from your fate—and send their Vacation Subscriptions NOW to the *Daily Worker*, 50 East 13th Street, New York City."

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What's On Your Mind?

Father Coughlin and anti-Semitism. Principles, not arithmetic, the answer to fascist demagogy.

QUESTIONS on various topics continue to arrive, some of them on themes that have been answered before in this department. We invite you to send in your questions; we shall make every effort to answer them promptly and satisfactorily.

Should any inquirer feel that he needs further details than the ones published under this department head, we will be glad to forward them upon request.

Q. What is the answer to the statement that Father Coughlin merely hates the Jews because they are all Communists?

A. To put the question in its proper light, it might be well to recall a little story by Philip Freneau, "poet of the Revolution." When the supporters of Thomas Jefferson attacked the anti-democratic rule of the Federalists, these early ancestors of the present-day tories answered with the charge that the Jeffersonian rabble were "enemies of the government." Freneau struck back at this demagogy with devastating satire. A pack of rogues, he said, once took possession of a church which was held in high veneration by the inhabitants of the surrounding district. From the sanctuary they sallied out every night, robbed all the neighbors, and when pursued, took shelter within the hallowed walls. If anyone attempted to molest them there, they deterred him from the enterprise by crying "sacrilege" and swearing they would denounce him to the Inquisition as a heretic and an enemy of the Holy Mother Church.

Suppose we were to demonstrate that Jews constitute only a small fraction of the Communist Party membership, as is actually the case. Does anyone imagine that that would deter Coughlin and his fascist sponsors from their real objectives? The same Father Coughlin who condemns the Jews as Communists also condemns them as international bankers! And if by any chance you don't happen to be a Jew, Communist, or banker, don't worry, Father Coughlin will make you one. All you have to be is an advocate of democracy or a champion of progress. President Roosevelt and Earl Browder have both been conveniently supplied with Jewish family trees by the fascists. Actually, therefore, it isn't the Jews that are being condemned as Communists, but the democrats and the Communists who are being turned into Jews! Freneau's story explains the secret of this fascist alchemy.

This ought to demonstrate that you can't combat anti-Semitism with arithmetic. It ought to be plain also that you can't combat it by lending aid and comfort to Red-baiting. Anti-Semitism and Red-baiting are the twin weapons which fascism employs against democracy and progress.

In ordinary mathematics one equals one. In the perverted arithmetic of fascism one equals ten. Altogether there were not more than 600,000 Jews in Germany when the Communists received six million votes prior to Hitler's seizure of power. Nevertheless, the fascists proclaimed that all Communists are Jews. Obviously, this perversion of facts is not accidental; it is the method in the madness of fascist demagogy. Conversely, the Communist Party, the trade unions, and other progressive organizations have long been suppressed by the Nazis, and yet bestial pogroms against the Jews continue.

It is therefore sheer naivete to plead that only *some* Jews are Communists, thereby blessing the very premises with which fascism justifies its persecution of *all* Jews. As if pogroms against Jews would be justified if a large enough number of Jews were Communists. The struggle against fascism is a matter of principle, not percentages.

The answer to Coughlin's demagogy is not to be found in figures. It is to be found in the unity and common action of all the forces of democracy and progress. There is no other defense against fascist barbarism.

Q. What values should education in a democracy inculcate, or should a democracy try to inculcate at all?

A. The great German poet Goethe once said with that keen and abundant wisdom so characteristic of him: "To really possess a thing you must fight for it anew each day." Democratic rights cannot be maintained and, least of all, extended unless the people are educated to cherish and defend them.

Democracy is not just a mental abstraction. It represents a society of living people. The fact that in our country it rests upon a capitalist basis with conflicting class interests only makes the vigilant and active defense of every democratic right all the more necessary for the overwhelming majority of the population.

Education, if it is to be more than an anemic excuse for itself, must promote: (1) The values inherent in science and scientific truth, the principle of unrestricted progress; (2) the values embodied in the democratic tradition as represented by Jefferson, Paine, Jackson, Lincoln, and the Declaration of Independence—the right of the majority to determine its own destiny; (3) the active struggle against reaction and all those forces that seek to limit or destroy democracy.

A. LANDY.

READER'S FORUM

On "General Krivitsky"

TO NEW MASSES: Enclosed is a copy of a letter I am forwarding to Dr. S. Margoshes of the *Jewish Day* anent his editorial of June 24, 1939, dealing with your expose of "General Krivitsky."

[ENCLOSURE]

My dear Dr. Margoshes: I have been following the "General Krivitsky—Shmelka Ginsberg" controversy with some interest, considering its relative unimportance in world affairs. Just when I thought the issue conclusively settled by NEW MASSES, and was about to relegate it to its proper place in the scheme of things, up popped your editorial of June 24, 1939, to unsettle me with new interpretations and ramifications.

Offhand I would say that you accepted the *Saturday Evening Post's* attitude much too willingly,

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without that customary grain of salt that is the basis of any thinking person's diet. If that popular (not with me) weekly raised the Jewish issue it was through no fault of NEW MASSES: it was merely an expression of the conservative (to put it nicely) policy of its editors, of which the Krivitsky articles may be cited as an example. Such articles seem aimed at disrupting the cordial relations existing between our country and the USSR, a particularly dangerous policy in the present period of world travail. Therefore, by revealing the fraudulent character of the person responsible for these articles, NEW MASSES should be given credit for a distinct service to the cause of world peace.

Two phases of your editorial interest me: first, that which accuses NEW MASSES of raising the Jewish issue; second, that which takes up the *Saturday Evening Post's* expose of the Jewish identity of some NEW MASSES writers and even goes the *Post* at least one better on that point. NEW MASSES, in bringing forth the true personality of Krivitsky, simply indicated him to be an unscrupulous adventurer and *bon vivant* who falsely laid claim to the authoritative title of "General Krivitsky." This was the main burden of the proof presented, the fact of his really being a Jew called Shmelka Ginsberg actually being secondary. As to your contention (copied from the *Saturday Evening Post)* that a similar fraud is practiced by NEW MASSES writers of Jewish extraction who seek to extend Communist influence in the hinterlands by assuming Americanized names, and that such fraud is totally unnecessary because of the legality of the Communist Party in the USA, I don't think that that contention has even one sound leg to rest on. Although, undoubtedly, the Communist Party in this country has much more freedom than was its lot in czarist Russia, nevertheless various laws passed recently in this state, which is a relatively progressive state, and various attacks of recent vintage in Congress, would indicate the dangers of being known as a Communist. It is this restriction, slight as it may seem, that makes some sort of subterfuge necessary. I am certain that most Communists would much prefer to function openly, under their own names, if they felt truly free to do so. I am just as certain that their influence would widen more rapidly this way, rather than in the indirect way indicated by the *Saturday Evening Post* and assented to by yourself.

It seems fair to assume that your judgment in this controversy may possibly be influenced by your own political prejudices. Although, personally, we may be of the opinion that the Communist Party is traveling along on a set of outworn ideological cylinders, this should not make us easy prey to the bait thrown out by such intellectually barren magazines as the *Post*.

That there are Jews in the Communist Party goes without question, and there will be as long as people feel the need for such an ideology. However, there are also non-Jews in the Communist Party, and the change of name is assumed by them as well —also for the sake of fooling the public?

Brooklyn, N. Y. H. FEINBERG.

[As this reader points out, Dr. Margoshes accepted the anti-Semitic premise of the *Saturday Evening Post* (which took it from the Trotskyites) that it is *Jewish* editors and contributors of NEW MASSES who are concealing their identities. The use of literary pseudonyms is not peculiar to Jews or Communists—for example, the Hitler agent George Sylvester Viereck writes in *Liberty* under the name of Donald F. Wickets, Isaac Don Levine uses such pseudonyms as Gen. W. G. Krivitsky, Fred Beal, etc., while some of Dr. Margoshes' own colleagues on the *Day* employ noms de plume.—THE EDITORS.]

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The Democratic Idea

On the 150th anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, fighters for democracy recall past struggles for man's liberty. Joseph Freeman traces an historic development.

REACTION has its own ruthless logic. In fighting what is new and healthy, fascism cannot simply try to restore the status quo ante. It must open the graves of history and deck itself out in the shrouds of monstrous skeletons from the remotest times. So Julian the Apostate, attacking the democratic Christian movement of his day, attempted in vain to revive a paganism long dead. So the eighteenth century tories, combating the Declaration of the Rights of Man, tried to restore a feudal order that had essentially perished long before they were born. So, too, fascism, seeking to halt the advance of democracy in the twentieth century, cannot simply go back to the days before 1917. It must seek to destroy the work of 1776 and 1789. It must attempt the impossible job of undoing the American and French Revolutions.

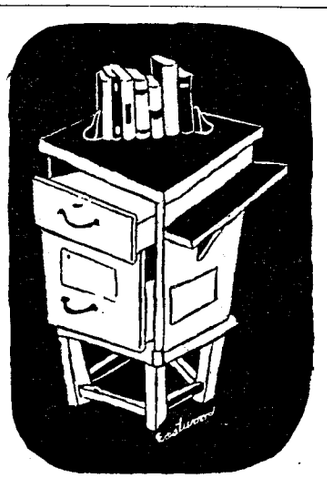
On July 14 the democratic forces of the world celebrate the 150th anniversary of the French Revolution. They celebrate it with an acute awareness that the ideals for which it stood are once more the center of worldwide conflict. Never have the principles of democracy been more important than they are today; never was it more important than now to understand the circumstances under which democracy was born.

Democratic practices came into the world because men were willing and able to struggle for them. The modern democratic idea contains many ingredients. It has within itself, among other things, the belief in reason and freedom developed by the Greeks; the faith in popular government developed by the Romans; the idea taught by Jesus that all men are equal not in capacity but in value; the freedom of conscience upon which the Puritan revolution insisted; the rights of man put forward by the American and French revolutions of the eighteenth century; the rights of labor developed in the nineteenth; the ideal of a classless society based upon common property put forward by scientific socialism; the belief advanced by the Renaissance and the Enlightenment that knowledge and art are indispensable to man's growth and happiness and must be given the fullest opportunities for development if civilization is to advance.

All these social goods are the result of unremitting struggle. In every age the democratic aspirations of the people have met with violent opposition from the dying, reactionary forces of the period. Every democratic aspiration had to be defended vigorously and without compromise. That is a law of history. You cannot destroy social evil without resisting it, or achieve social good without fighting for it. Our democratic heritage comes to us out of the great labors and sacrifices and sufferings and battles of countless generations of men and women.

The French Revolution was inspired by the American Revolution, which in turn was inspired by the Puritan Revolution in seventeenth century England. Our historic memories are short, and we tend to think of the democratic idea wholly as the product of the past three centuries. Actually, it took eight hundred years—eight long centuries — of struggle to achieve the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of the Rights of Man. From the tenth century on, the progressive bourgeoisie fought out step by step the tenets of its democratic gospel. Slow gain alternated with crushing failure. The bourgeois revolution was defeated in the Albigenses of thirteenth century France; in the Lollards of fourteenth century England and in Rienzi of fourteenth century Italy; in the Taborites of sixteenth century Bohemia; in the peasant followers of Muenzer of sixteenth century Germany.

Not until the seventeenth century did the democratic idea based on private property score a victory under the Puritans in England. And if anyone still thinks of the writer as a shrinking violet who wants the fruits of democracy without the struggle, let him remember that beside the heroic figure of Cromwell there fought, as an active member of the revolutionary government, the sublime figure of Milton. The work of Milton, in pamphlets as in poetry, is part of our democratic literary heritage. That tradition was developed and enhanced by the eighteenth century Enlightenment, which removed from men's minds the accumulated cobwebs of the ages, and asserted the supremacy of reason.



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But when we think with gratitude of the revolutionary writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot, let us not forget that the democratic vision of the Enlightenment went even further. For nearly a century before the destruction of the Bastille, French writers poured out novels describing ideal republics in which there was no private property, in which the community owned everything in common. Even after the revolution was in progress, Condorcet urged the eighteenth century democratic dream intact. No limit, he insisted, could be set to the human faculties. Progress might be swift or slow but the ultimate end is sure. The indefinite advance of mankind presupposes the elimination of inequality among peoples, classes, and the sexes. Science would make endless progress. Wars would end forever. Finally, mankind would unite in a permanent federation of the peoples of the world.

This was the lofty promise with which the French Revolution began. That revolution was the most liberating event in history until the year 1917. For all its limitations, it advanced mankind a long way on the road toward democracy. And so the reactionaries of Europe made war upon revolutionary France. From 1789 to 1815, a long period of twenty-six years, the history of Europe was the history of the resistance of revolutionary France against the attempts of the reaction to crush it by force of arms. And the literature of Europe was dominated by that gigantic struggle on which hung the destinies of men and their highest hopes. When we consider our literary traditions, we always come back to those writers who, pro or con, romantically or realistically, centered their thoughts and feelings and creative energies around the hopes and problems raised by the French Revolution. We always come back to Byron, Shelley, and Hunt; to Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge; to Chateaubriand, Nodier, and Stendhal—and to heirs of the Enlightenment like Balzac, Flaubert, and Zola.

The relation of the writer to the central historic events of his age is of vital importance to us, and, if we avoid mechanical analogies, we may learn a few things from the reactions of various writers to the French Revolution. The case of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey is a classic. These poets at first hailed the French Revolution with romantic joy. But great social change appears romantic only when you understand it and believe in it. When you become confused, romance changes to horror. Wordsworth and his friends were horrified first by Robespierre

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because they did not understand that he was ridding France of traitors and counter-revolutionaries. Then they were horrified because France, resisting invasion since 1789, took the military initiative against its foes. As a result of these two necessary events, Wordsworth and his circle discovered that revolutionary France had become despotic France. This so outraged their democratic sensibilities that they went down on all fours and licked the boots of the most loathsome English tories, who were waging war on democracy at home and abroad.

Significantly enough, Wordsworth and Coleridge underwent a literary change of life after they turned against the French Revolution. They lost their poetic elan, and though they lived for three more decades, they wrote nothing as vital as their early revolutionary poetry. It seems that history does not permit anybody to stand still. You either go forward or backward. No longer inspired by the democratic struggle, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey could not remain neutral. They had to become reactionaries. And since no one can write deeply who does not believe deeply, they paid for their political sins with literary sterility.

Other English poets saw the situation more clearly. To the end of his life, Byron stood by the French Revolution, Napoleon and all. After Waterloo and the victory of the ultra-reactionary Holy Alliance, the liberals of Europe had a chance to learn in the most painful way the real alternatives which history offered them. They had called the revolution despotic. Now the system of Metternich suppressed all free speech and free thought, hounded and exiled progressive writers, drowned popular democratic movements in blood—and taught the world what despotism really is and who exercises it. And so in the thirties, you find the democratic people of France and democratic poets like Victor Hugo and Heinrich Heine invoking against the Holy Alliance the memory of 1793, which Walt Whitman called the great natal year.

The necessary limitations of the French Revolution and its defeat by the Holy Alliance led to literary movements which the textbooks indiscriminately lump together under the heading of Romanticism. But not all the Romantic writers saw the world with the same eyes. What they had in common was the insistence on the original prophecies of the bourgeois democratic revolution. They wanted the nineteenth century to pay off the promissory note of the eighteenth. That was historically impossible. Instead of universal liberty, equality, and fraternity, the world now had capitalism.

Disappointed in the outcome of the bourgeois revolution, Wordsworth and his circle consoled themselves with Nature. Disappointed French writers like de Senancourt preached suicide as the one action in a despotic world in which a man was wholly his own master. Others, like Chateaubriand, became ardent Catholics, finding solace in an idealized church. Other writers, steeped in the great rationalism which had just preceded them, yet desperately in need of some faith to sustain them in a world they could neither understand nor control, made a religion of their art, and endowed the brush of the painter and the pen of the author with the ineffable qualities of the Holy Ghost. Clear-sighted Shelley, on the other hand, saw mankind emerging from its trance, in "a slow, gradual, silent change." As a matter of fact the world was at that very moment undergoing a change which in its consequences for human destiny and human liberty far transcended all the political revolutions from the days of Akhenaton to the days of Jefferson.

Recorded history began some five thousand years ago with man's discovery of agriculture; and down through the ages, all the way to the nineteenth century, agriculture remained the basis of man's life. The roots of every democratic dream eventually went back to the land. And as long as man existed by the old means, as long as he continued to make his livelihood with a wooden plow and produced goods by hand and traveled by horse as the Babylonians had traveled, every democratic dream was bound to remain in practice the limited privilege of a small group of property owners. The reason was simple enough. There could be no complete democracy without economic democracy; and there could be no economic democracy until a way was found for vastly increasing the wealth of the world. That way was found. The Industrial Revolution closed that five-thousand-year-old epoch which the agricultural revolution had opened. Science and invention, even under capitalist restrictions, fabulously increased the material goods of society. Properly distributed, there was enough wealth, actual and potential, for a genuine, all-embracing democracy.

Out of this tremendous economic change in the life of man the socialist movement came into being, and it came consciously as an extension of earlier democratic ideas. Writers of the eighteenth century Enlightenment, thinkers like Kant, had envisioned the classless society, but they could not see how such a society could be attained. In fact, the elements for its attainment were not there. The Communists saw the means. They saw the economic and historic conditions were there; they saw the revolutionary class was there; and they developed a science for achieving socialist democracy.

The founders of that science, Marx and Engels, said that Communists have no interests apart from the interests of the people: they paid homage to the democratic ideas of the Enlightenment out of which socialist democracy emerged. When Communists attack the limitations of capitalist democracy, it is not because they want no democracy, but because they want more democracy; they want that complete democracy which socialism alone can give by establishing the indispensable economic foundations. But the Communists retain the democratic heritage of the

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past. That is the conservative aspect of Communism. While the fascists want to revive only the poison of the past, we want to retain all that is good in the past, all that is progressive in the present. With the help of these the future can be created.

We can see this process in the development of American literature. Out of the Great Tradition which gave us Whittier and Whitman there grew that American socialist literature which gave us Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and John Reed. The writers of this movement saw the direct connection between democracy and socialism long ago. "Americanism is an idea," Julian Hawthorne wrote in 1902, "and that idea is socialism." It was the socialist writers of America, who, more than any others, maintained the memory and influence of Walt Whitman as the great poet of democracy.

The Industrial Revolution speeded up not only production, but history itself. Things moved fast. It took seven hundred years to produce the first successful bourgeois revolution; it took less than a century to produce the first successful socialist revolution. The Soviet Union has shown what an emancipated people can do with modern science, machinery, and socialism. Unlike the French Revolution, the October Revolution has carried out its promises. It has abolished private property in the means of production. It has eliminated unemployment, economic crises, and exploitation. It has given 170,000,000 people economic security, education, health and leisure, access to knowledge and art. In ten years it has planned and carried out the greatest economic advances and placed their results at the disposal of the people.

This is a kind of democracy which the reactionaries in the capitalist countries cannot tolerate. The crusade against socialism is far more brutal and barbarous than the crusade against early nineteenth century bourgeois democracy. The fascists launched this crusade with the approval of non-fascist powers. These imagined that fascism would stop with the destruction of labor organizations at home, and proceed with ease to the destruction of the Soviet Union. But it soon became evident even to the most stupid tories that the Soviet Union is no easy thing to destroy. Socialism makes a people not only free but also strong.

Meantime, to exist at all, fascism must seek to destroy every social good at home and abroad. It must devour lands and peoples, thought and art. It can exist only by enslaving its own people, by assaulting everything that is free and healthy in the world around it. In order to prevent democracy from reaching its full growth, its highest level of development, fascism must try to annihilate every vestige of democracy which has ever existed. It must try to prevent the fruit by killing the seed.

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some writers think. It's a great task, and its successful fulfillment would liberate the world from a terrible blight.

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Step was big and strong, with too much pride and temper. Ed was able to control his temper. In Las Cruces, N. M., they picked up a Mexican kid whose only English phrase was Hi Boy. Step and Ed called him Hi Boy. The kid could shoot and smoke and ride the freights as well as his companions. Step and Ed loved Hi Boy and made him one of their foot-weary crew. The three shared excitement and misery. Step brought them lots of misery which even Ed's coolheadedness couldn't mend.

In the Yakima Valley in California they got jobs with a small, friendly planter, a sort of philosopher who had gathered up all the valley's folk and Indian legends. Sampson, the planter, had a naive, adventurous daughter, who fell in love with Step as soon as she saw him. Step, to whom all women were the same, took her offers at face value. Meanwhile, Sampson developed a tremendous affection for Hi Boy. The tangles of human relations, distorted out of sensible proportion by the crazy existence of these people, brought misery to the four adults and death to the chirpy little Mexicano, Hi Boy.

That is most of the story of *Let Me Breathe Thunder* (Doubleday, Doran & Co., $2) by a young Negro writer, William Attaway. The publishers and other reviewers have made a great deal of the interesting fact that this is perhaps the first novel about whites by a Negro. The fact is significant, I suppose, but it is not freakish. Attaway lived the life he writes about, and there is no reason why he should not deal with whites. These migrant workers and small farmers know little of prejudice.

The book is in many ways similar to Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. Step and Ed are

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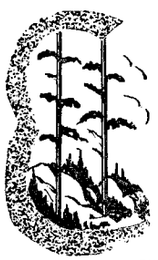

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much like Lenny and Bill, the planter's daughter like the girl who finally brought about Lenny's death. The comparison is a bit troubling in the early part of the book, for one is likely to feel, as I did, that Attaway is only cashing in on the literary glamour of migratory labor, for which Steinbeck is largely responsible. But it is not so, as one soon finds out. Attaway's characters and style are completely his own, and the story has more to it. You don't come away from it with the feeling that the author got off the track, that he was trying to promote sympathy for a mental quirk rather than understanding of the causes of the malady.

RICHARD H. ROVERE.

Between Two Worlds

Howard Selsam reviews "No Compromise," by Melvin Rader.

"THE struggle between two worlds [democracy and fascism] can permit no compromise. . . . Either we or they!" said Mussolini in 1921. Melvin Rader, assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Washington, hurls back the challenge by showing why believers in democracy can make no compromise with the theory and practice of fascism. (*No Compromise,* the Macmillan Co., $3.50.) And lest the reader wonder why a teacher of philosophy should write on such a subject rather than on traditional problems of metaphysics or epistemology, Professor Rader answers that unless we repair the material and the spiritual bases of life there will be no philosophy.

There has been no dearth of books on fascism, but very few have presented the fascist ideology so clearly, and with such constant and penetrating comparison with the philosophy of social and economic democracy. Beginning with fascism as "the product of war and economic collapse," Professor Rader proceeds to analyze its theoretical foundations (or, rather, manifestations or concomitants, inasmuch as it was a movement first and a "philosophy" afterwards) in terms of Western intellectual history. The author considers the following major problems presented by fascist theory:

Should we rely, more or less, upon reason as a basis of social action? Can there be a science of values? Is it possible, and if so is it desirable, to achieve impartiality in the sphere of morals? Should the direction of society be placed in the hands of an elite? To what extent are men and nations justified in resorting to violence? Should individuals be subordinated to the state, or should the state be merely an instrument for the welfare of individuals? Are ideals or material processes more fundamental as historical causes? Can Western civilization survive, or is it doomed? What sort of program, if any, offers hope for the salvaging of civilization?

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And finally, in the last chapter, entitled "The Present Clash of Ideals," *No Compromise* presents a powerful call for the unity of all who wish to preserve and carry on the positive achievements of Western civilization. This is accomplished not by rhetorical pomp or paternalistic lecturing but with astonishing simplicity by a careful statement of the course of action history now makes necessary if the human values that science and reason point out to us are to be realized.

The most persistent theme in Rader's analysis of the ideological expression of fascism is its anti-rationalism, its contempt for science, and its denial of any universality in the whole field of human judgments. He painstakingly shows that the substitution of volition and instinct, of "blood and soil," for example, for the scientific method and spirit, threatens to undermine democratic institutions throughout the world. And he traces this anti-intellectual movement through countless thinkers, especially Fichte, Nietzsche, Bergson, James, Pareto, Sorel, Spengler, and others, down to Mussolini, Gentile, Hitler, and Rosenberg. Chapter III, entitled: "Valuations: Sentimental or Scientific?" is especially good for the author's positive contribution to the subject of the possibility of scientific determination of values. The chapter on the idealistic mask of fascism beautifully portrays the concrete ways in which philosophical idealism can be made to function on behalf of political and social reaction, and why fascists fear and must fight against philosophical materialism with its recognition of the basic role played in society and history by the physical environment, economic conditions, and technological factors.

Professor Rader, in nine brief pages on "The Collapse of Traditional Liberalism," presents with amazing succinctness the rise, limitations, and decline of the older liberalism, and shows that it must either succumb before the onslaught of fascism or give way to a "new" liberalism which implies a socialized system of distribution and ownership.

The last chapter contains an analysis of the present world crisis, a fine statement of the need for, and problems of, the united front, and finally an outline of fascist strategy and the program and tactics the anti-fascist front must follow, both on a national and an international scale. Especially good is the analysis of the pro-fascist nature of Red-baiting and the need for Communists in the united front:

> Surely a good cause should not be deserted merely because Communists support it. Indeed, it would seem to be no great tragedy that Communists, all over the world, are now combining with the milder democratic groups against fascism and reaction and in defense of republican institutions. There would seem to be more occasion for worry if the Communists, who represent internationally a force of immense power, were to exercise their influence against democracy and in support of fascism.

No Compromise, as Lewis Mumford writes for the jacket, "distinguishes itself from any merely academic treatise by the moral robustness and the intellectual incisiveness of its presentation." HOWARD SELSAM.

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Ragtag and Bobtail

A light chowder of Dugan's deathless prose on the latest trends and tricks in the cinema. Death takes a holiday in "On Borrowed Time."

THE grim weeper has struck again at the Capitol (N. Y.). *On Borrowed Time* typifies that decadent branch of American dramaturgy that gains its effects like a campfire girl ghost story. The tale is a whimsical conceit about Gramps Northrup and his grandson Pud encountering one Mr. Brink, the great leveler. With justifiable timidity MGM prefaces the piece with the claim that Chaucer was not above a similar tale. I haven't my Caslon Chaucer at hand but if memory serves, the old scribbler had a horny young lady up the tree and, unlike Mr. Brink's doomed supplicants, the character who climbed the tree after her was on a carnal errand. Naturally such doings are too coarse for the drama, 1939, but useful as a high-toned literary alibi for movie purposes. Lionel Barrymore, who else, is Gramps, which is double-talk for the gripes and cramps the audience must suffer. Bobs Watson is the little lad and you can hardly wait for Mr. Brink (Sir Cedric Hardwicke) to claim him. On the same bill, however, there is a happy lecture by Prof. Robert Benchley on gustatory dilemmas. If you watch your Capitol timetable closely you can see *How To Eat* without the additional information on how to die.

AERIAL GRAND HOTEL

The walls of the Rialto (N. Y.) have stopped quivering from machine-gun and six-gun fire long enough to enclose an entertaining and thoughtful B picture called *Five Came Back*. The story is hardly new, being the one about the airliner with its odds of passengers forced down in the jungle. Some passengers funk, others reveal heroic traits, while the savages are beating their vengeful drums in the swamps. We have had *Grand Hotel,* Grand Hotel on a stage coach, a number of Grand Hotels on trains, and now another good one in the air. Good as they may be, the available transportation devices have virtually been exhausted, if you exclude the possibility of Grand Hotel on stilts or roller skates. What makes the picture good is the excellent characterizations provided by scriptwriters Dalton Trumbo (he did *A Man to Remember*), Jerry Cady, and Nathanael West, and director John Farrow. A fine cast includes Chester Morris, C. Aubrey Smith, Lucille Ball, Wendie Barrie, John Carradine, Joseph Calleia, and Allen Jenkins.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN

One of the most interesting newsreel shots around town is the one showing Neville Chamberlain's anti-appeasement speech to a Conservative Party rally. Several reels treat it at length, the statesman closeup under a white awning and his bedraggled followers hear-hearing in the rain. Mr. Chamberlain's manner is that of an angular Herbert Hoover. He actually has those piano key teeth which David Low plays with in caricature, and there is white on the forelock and temples like a pallid laurel wreath from scapegrace cousin Adolf. The man has an air of antiquity, as though he belonged with the ridiculous monsters of European pre-war diplomacy you see in historical newsreels. It is hard to believe one so fit for Madame Tussaud runs a world. Compare him to Franklin Roosevelt, appearing in an al fresco press conference in the same reels, for a lesson in character.

MOVIE HISTORY

March of Time's newest essay, on the forty-year history of the American movies, covers a very considerable subject impossible to condense into a half-hour of film, no matter how rude the cutting. It makes no sense out of the various trends in our movies but it does emphasize at the end the emergence of social themes. Beginning with Edison's clip of the May Irwin kiss, the film continues through Chaplin and Bill Hart, *The Birth of a Nation,* Sam Goldwyn's early film of Mary Garden in *Thais,* Valentino, *The Covered Wagon,* Garbo and Gilbert, and *The Big Parade.* Then sound, with *The Jazz Singer, All Quiet on the Western Front, Cavalcade,* and Will Rogers in *David Harum.* Finally, Paul Muni giving Zola's outcry for Dreyfus as a proof of the movies' maturity. Much of the commentary accompanying these short takes is pure nonsense, such as the claim that *Cavalcade* advanced the movie art. In an epilogue the leading executives are pictured, not forgetting a neat hosanna for Brother Hays and Cousin Breen. Only a charming shot of Walt Disney acting out a Mickey Mouse gesture, and Walter Wanger in a short speech for social films, seemed important to me. *March of Time* points to the plans for the making of *Personal History* and *The Grapes of Wrath* as an indication that Hollywood is taking its majority seriously. In sum, the reel is superficial, but it will undoubtedly have its effect in making moviegoers aware of the emerging social film.

A practically unknown branch of movie making in this country is the appearance each year of a dozen or more films for and by Negroes. They are hackneyed imitations of

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Hollywood B films but have a stable audience in Negro communities. The treatment of the Negro in Hollywood has been notoriously chauvinistic. With these facts in mind a new group, with the doubleheader title of the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films (why not make it Committee for Better Negro Films?), has been organized to produce true pictures about the Negro through the agency of Frontier Films. Identified with the committee are Dr. Max Yergan and Paul Robeson. Production plans are brewing.

JAMES DUGAN.

Radio Strip Show

Morning broadcasts feature crudest programs on the air.

THE morning strip show, so called because, like a comic strip, it is continued from day to day, is the absolute zero of radio broadcasting. From nine until two throughout the week, the air is gummed up with the stickiest, crudest exhibition of dramatic ignorance that lack of ingenuity can develop.

Naturally, we all know that the purpose of this drivel is to sell merchandise, but at the same time, it doesn't place a very high value on the intelligence of the average American housewife. It's quite possible—because stranger things have happened—that listeners do go for this trash, but I doubt it very much. It doesn't seem logical that any woman is so starved for entertainment that she can suffer the same old rehashing of far-fetched and impossible sketches, and not begin to resent the insult to her sense of good taste. Prominent actors have told me that to read some of the lines on these programs is even more sickening than listening to them. But they can't do anything about it.

Of course there's a very good reason for this condition in the early-day broadcast hours. It happens that the strip show is the one feature on the air that advertising agencies completely monopolize. And this is the simplest form of drama to copy and slap together.

Let's list a few of the brain children nursed by the agency field. You will observe that in most instances they've hardly even gone out of their way to change titles: Jane Arden, Joyce Jordan, Kitty Kelly, Helen Trent, Betty and Bob, Vic and Sade, Aunt Jenny, Ma Perkins, John's Other Wife, Dan Harding's Wife, Arnold Grimm's Daughter, Doc Barclay's Daughters. There's no sense continuing, though the surface has only been scratched. Any addition to the list is simply a repetition of something else, slightly camouflaged.

Several of these outfits, such as the Aunt Jenny brigade, pass out mimeographed formulas to those writers who aspire to submit a series of scripts. This outline explains precisely how the program is to be written, and also accounts for the reason they all sound alike. Even WMCA has fallen in with the unimaginative clique and now devotes its two best evening hours to recorded strip shows.

Coming

The editors of *New Masses* present the following major features scheduled to appear in early issues.

Ella Winter

Noted West Coast editor and writer probes deep into the problems of the federated crafts workers in Hollywood. The history of craft organization, its development in the film capital and its future are brilliantly analyzed.

Wellington Roe

This noted writer, novelist, peers beneath the cassock of the fascist priest of Royal Oak and tells some unprinted facts about Father Coughlin, America's Number One Anti-Semite.

Jean Starr Untermeyer

Poet and author contributes a moving article, one of a series, titled, "I Fight Fascism." Jean Starr Untermeyer tells what she is doing, what she hasn't done and what she intends to do—as a writer—to ward off the growing menace.

Marc Frank

Contributes an exhaustive survey of conditions below the Rio Grande and the political perspectives in the offing for our sister Republic of Mexico.

Alvah Bessie

The second in a series of a story of Americans who fought in Spain—from a forthcoming novel which will be published this fall.

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The matter of popular music over the air is no less unsatisfactory. The most depressing form of melodic insanity seems to be occupying the spotlight, and destroying every appealing characteristic that popular music ever had. There is absolutely no excuse, other than brain concussion, for the composition of such discords as "Hold Tight," "Jump Session," "Flat Foot Floogie," and most of the other abnormalities written in the name of "swing."

But there's a reason for it, and it lies with the music publishers. Tin Pan Alley isn't interested in producing good music today. It has one aim and only one, and that is to get a piece played over the air as often as possible—because every time a song is played over a network, the music publisher gets 25 cents from each station on the hookup. And when the national shows have seventy-five to 125 stations on a network, 25 cents per station runs into money. Some songs are played from "coast to coast" five or six times a day.

But sponsors also figure in the general mess. Because of their opposition, the broadcasting companies have barred such tunes as Harold J. Rome's *Sing Me a Song of Social Significance, One Big Union for Two, Papa Lewis and Mama Green*—all from *Pins and Needles*—and such TAC hits as the Toby Sacher-Lewis Allen *Chamberlain Crawl,* and *Daladier* by Lewis Allen. All of those songs have excellent lyrics and tuneful melodies, but they will not be broadcast as long as radio is controlled by soap flakes and hand lotions.

JOHN VERNON.

Dance Cabaret

Theater Arts Committee presents its first dance program.

THE Theater Arts Committee, expanding its activities, presented its first dance program at the Ninety-Second Street YMHA (N. Y.) and, judging by the enthusiasm of its first audience, TAC Dance Cabaret should prove a steady diet for the dance season 1939-40.

The evening's entertainment included *The Curse of the Silk Chemise,* with Tony Kraber at the guitar; Dorothy Bird in the still favorite *Priscilla Picketline* (who "had a line" which Beatrice Kaye continues to sing with much vigor and swell results); Lotte Goslar's *Little Heap of Misery* and *Intoxication,* two spots of good comic-strip caricatures; Meta Krahn and Otto Ulbricht in *Circus Spotlights (Parody on an Indian Fakir, Dance of the Clown,* and *Apache Dance),* all good fun; Agnes De Mille, assisted by Sybil Shearer, in her satires on modern and ballet dancers and dancing; Jack Cole and members of the Theater Dance Company in *West Indian Impression* and the not too happy *Impressions of a Georgia Revival Meeting;* Atty Van Den Berg in a lyric *Happy Maiden;* Esther Junger in two stylized jazz numbers—and Philip Loeb doing the inimitable introductions. TAC's dance division should go places, and quickly.

OWEN BURKE.

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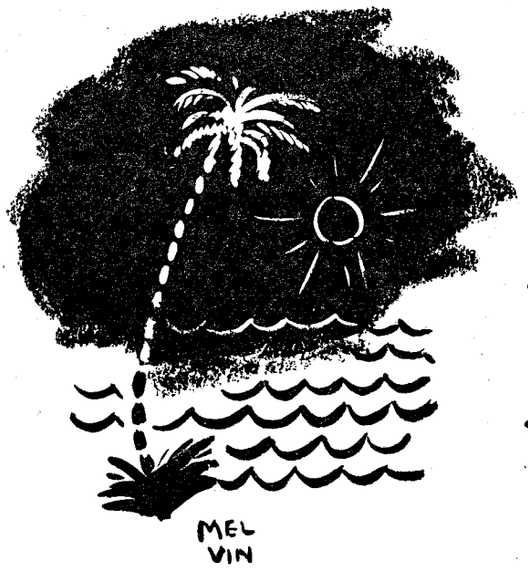

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To say that something is just as refreshing as a swim at Wakiki, with its cool Hawaiian breezes and shady palm trees, is certainly saying *plenty* . . Yet that's exactly how New Masses readers feel about New Masses circulation. As the number of subscriptions rise, they seem to forget the rise in temperature. Of course the $200 in prizes makes it all the more refreshing.

The Winner of the Week!

This week's prize of $10 is unanimously awarded to "Mr. Anonymous." His prize-winning slogan which was selected by the contest judges is:

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"America's Indispensable Weekly"—"America's Ace Popular Political Weekly"—"Today's Events in Present Tense"—"The Stopwatch of Contemporary History"—"America's Champion News Interpreter"—"America's Crack Viewsmagazine"

The important thing to remember as you talk to your friends is that the slogan must be a thrilling, hard-hitting sales talk for NEW MASSES in not more than five words.

Reach for a pencil. Start making lists of everybody you know, getting a buck or more from them for a sub, and then get them to enter the contest too. It's really a sort of a giant Build NEW MASSES chain letter idea, isn't it?

So get your pencil and start competing—TODAY!

HERE ARE THE RULES

1. Everyone but NM staff members and their relatives is eligible.
2. The contest opens June 22 and closes September 4 (Labor Day).
3. Slogans must not exceed five words but may be less.
4. Here's how to qualify for the contest: Go to your friends, relatives, and professional acquaintances and convince them to become regular NEW MASSES readers. While you are showing them the magazine and talking about its fine points you will find yourself expressing its qualities in terms your listeners are interested in. This is what will make up the grand prize slogan —a sharp, terse, and dramatic description of the usefulness of the magazine to progressive people.

   For every $1 twelve-week trial subscription you secure you may submit one slogan.

   For every $2.50 six-month subscription you may submit two slogans.

   For every $4.50 yearly subscription you may submit three slogans.

   There is no limit to the number of slogans you may submit. Simply accompany them with the required number of cash subscriptions. The greater the number of slogans you submit, greater your chance of winning weekly prize of $10 and the gra prize of $100.00.

   If you are not a subscriber n you may enter the contest by send in your own yearly subscript ($4.50). If you are a subscriber, may enter the contest merely by tending the life of your own curr subscription for one year ($4.50).
5. The first contest winner will be nounced in the issue of NEW MAS that appears July 6. In that issue in each of the next nine issues we reprint the winning slogan and aw the weekly prize of $10.00. One mo after the closing date of the cont we will announce the winner of grand prize of $100.00.
6. All slogans submitted, whether w ners or not, become the property NEW MASSES, and cannot be return In the event of a tie for weekly grand prize the full amount of prize will be awarded to each ty contestant.
7. Judges of the contest will be th editors of NEW MASSES—Joseph No A. B. Magil, Samuel Sillen. Th decisions are final.

Build New Masses Slogan Contest JULY 18, 19

ROOM 1204, 461 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

Gentlemen: Here is my slogan entry. Please send NEW MASSES for twe issues for $1 as per your trial offer ☐; for six months at $2.50 ☐; for year at $4.50 ☐ to:

Name of New Subscriber . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

My Slogan for NEW MASSES Is . . . . . .

. . . . . .

My Name Is . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

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